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The Week

THE end of the League Assembly has brought the customary flood of newspaper editorials as to the value of the work accomplished this year. As usual, friends of the League profess to see a fine record of achievement, while its foes are unable to discover anything but futility and failure. Equally as usual, the truth seems to lie about halfway between the two. Of the several new proposals advanced this year not one has more than the remotest chance of successful fruition. The French asked for a "world-wide" conference on limitation of armament; but this was clearly no more than a political move intended to head off ambitions in the same direction by President Coolidge. Great Britain, whose Conservative government has its own reasons for not wishing to enter a general conference just now, pointed out that in the absence of Russia from the society of nations it is impossible to guarantee that security which must underlie any disarmament proposal. The suggestion was therefore whittled down into a most modest proposal that machinery be set up to determine when, if ever, the question of security will have been solved to a sufficient extent to make a conference possible.

AN EQUALLY lugubrious fate overcame the French suggestion for a world-wide conference on economic resources. Every student of history knows that, particularly in recent years, the struggle for control of raw materials has been a fertile cause of international hostility. The French plan looked toward nothing less than ultimately allocating, on a basis of needs, those raw materials which are now obtained outside the territories of the great powers. The system would be like that set up for the same purpose by the Supreme Economic Council during the closing days of the War. It was a striking proposal; but again, British opposition whittled it down until nothing is left except a suggestion that a committee ought to go to work to determine the possible items on the agenda of such a conference, if and when held. That the British would take the stand they did in regard to both these matters was more or less a foregone conclusion. In recent years a strong current of opinion has developed among the smaller countries in favor of rigid, compulsory arbitration of all international disputes. These countries, obviously, would have little to lose and much to gain from such a state of things. England and the United States, on the other hand, are now the two most powerful of the old-fashioned predatory powers, and are strongly opposed to any scheme of things which prevents their backing up their policies, in the last resort, with military and naval force.

NO ONE knows this better than the intelligent leaders of French diplomacy; and it is therefore reasonable to suppose that France took the stand she did at Geneva last month more for the sake of registering her moral leadership of the small nations than with any hope of securing immediate results. It is, no doubt, for the same reason that we have heard so much about the necessity for returning to the Protocol of Geneva, launched a year ago under French auspices and rejected by the Conservative government of Great Britain. The New Republic believes that the French are correct in saying that international peace can only be maintained in the

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long run by genuinely outlawing war, which in turn is only possible through making compulsory arbitration a rule to which there are no exceptions whatever. It is only commonsense to recognize, however, that the implacable opposition of Great Britain and the United States and the continued ignoring of Russia by the rest of Europe make realization of the plan enormously difficult.

THE prestige of the League has been somewhat injured during the past month by the handling of the Mosul question, instanced by hostile critics as fresh proof that Geneva is unable to deal with a grave international problem except on the terms, and according to the desires, of the great powers. Despite all the elaborate machinery for inquiry and adjudication, Turkey and Great Britain are today perilously near to open warfare. The Turks arrived at Geneva to find the cards apparently stacked against them. There was an evident intention to give Mosul and its rich oil fields to Great Britain, acting through her dummy kingdom of Irak, provided the mandate over the latter would be continued for not less than twenty-five years. Faced by this fait accompli, Turkey developed an ugly mood. She had agreed some time ago to abide by the decision of the League Council, but with an explicit understanding that she would be represented on the Council during the discussion and empowered to vote. Since the decision must be unanimous, this would have given her a veto power over any action unsatisfactory to herself.

INSTEAD, she finds Great Britain demanding, with a great show of good sportsmanship, that both the Turkish and British representatives should refrain from voting. This of course would enable the other members of the Council to carry out the British desires, as they clearly intended to do. In these circumstances Turkey has repudiated her agreement to stand by the result of the Council's action, and has threatened to fight. The League, with its prestige thus imperilled, has asked the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion as to whether the Council's decision must be unanimous. The Court will move with due deliberation, and give a breathing space of a few months; but if it decides in favor of unanimity, the deadlock will be indefinitely continued, and if the decision is of the opposite character, Turkey is more than likely to appeal to arms. She cannot hope to defeat her old friend, Great Britain, in the field; but the Turkish leaders know that the enormously expensive Irak mandate is already unpopular in England, that a war would be costly and that the Empire is very hard up. Meanwhile, and whatever the outcome, the incident serves to show how difficult it is, despite the most elaborate machinery of reconciliation, to reconcile the conflicting ambitions of two countries both of which want possession of the same territory.

ANOTHER appalling disaster has been added to the too-long recent list of the U. S. Navy, with the loss of the submarine S-51, rammed at night by the steamer City of Rome, with the drowning of 34 men. In this instance at least, there is no evidence that the loss of life was due to the inefficiency or carelessness of high officials of the Navy. Collision at sea is always a possibility, even with the greatest vigilance. For submarines, with their low visibility even on the surface, and despite recently-invented electrical devices for detecting the approach of a vessel, it is a peril which is much greater than with other types of ships. The submarine at best is highly dangerous, as is evidenced by the long list of disastrous accidents which have occurred in time of peace and under apparently normal conditions. Since this type of craft has practically no value except as a war instrument, it is reasonable to hope that if war is ever abolished, the undersea ships will go with it.

MEANWHILE, the two inquiries designed to disclose the efficiency or lack of it in the military and naval air forces have continued. That growing out of Colonel Mitchell's charges has not, as we go to press, revealed anything not already known. The Army and Navy have seized the chance to point out that they don't get sufficient appropriations from Congress. That of course is no news: if any army or navy should ever decide that its appropriation is adequate, you may feel sure that the millennium has arrived. High officers in the Army and Navy we are told, disapprove of the Mitchell plan for unified control. That also is no news. Whether any real effort will be made to get to the bottom of the Colonel's charges that the recent loss of life in aviation has been due in part to "incompetence and criminal neglect" has not yet been revealed.

THE other investigation, into the loss of the Shenandoah, has disclosed some facts which seem in general to support the Mitchell allegations. That the ship was known to be in an unsatisfactory condition is evidenced by the plans for new engines and remodeling which were on foot. It is also clear despite Secretary Wilbur's explicit denial, that Commander Lansdowne did not regard his ship as being any too airworthy, and wanted to postpone the flight until the period of heavy thunderstorms was past. He was balked in this desire by an unnamed superior authority, who wished, for political reasons, to have the Shenandoah appear at several state fairs in the Middle West. The testimony already adduced makes it clear, first, that the safety of the Shenandoah crew was made secondary to political considerations; and second, that the dirigible in its present development is altogether too fragile and unreliable to have any real value either military or commercial.

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THE State Department has now discovered that the participation of its citizens in internal warfare in a country in which it possesses extra-territorial rights is illegal and contrary to international law. This apparently reduces the status of the American aviators with the French army to that of pirates, and Abd-el-Krim is merely following precedent in putting a price on their heads. There is nothing for the Department to do but make formal demand on France for the disbanding of the squadron. It is argued that their presence is helpful in assuaging the bitterness of France toward the United States in its rôle of Shylock. It may be replied that if the memory of 30,000 Americans who died fighting in brotherhood of arms with the French cannot assuage her bitterness, nothing ever will do so. Meanwhile, what of the bitterness in Moslem lands? As for the American aviators of the Escadrille Lafayette, who so jauntily defy the laws of their country, they are plain murderers, of the new type recently identified as thrill killers. For vanity and joy of killing, they wipe out whole villages of helpless people. Their most serious casualty so far reported is that of one comrade who broke his arm by being over-zealous in releasing his bombs. Their function, like that of other spectacular criminals, is to provide sensations for the newspapers and movies; and, as in the case of such criminals, the public by its appreciation makes itself an accomplice in the crime.

GREAT Britain has suddenly gone in for what looks at this distance like a burst of hysteria about the menace of communism. Even the Liberal organs and leaders have for the most part joined the Conservatives in loud wails over the impending destruction of the country by the Reds. Very little tangible evidence is offered in support of this gloomy view. The Scarborough Trades Union Congress terrified the newspapers by authorizing an ultimatum to the Amsterdam International saying that the Russian trade unions should be represented on the same basis with those from other countries. Even more dreadful action, of an unstated nature, is expected at the Liverpool meeting of the Labor party, which is just about to begin as we go to press. On this basis, dark threats are heard that a general strike is coming and an organization is being formed to comprise those devoted members of the middle and upper classes willing to lend a hand and keep the essential services in operation if the workers should walk out. It is certainly true that of late the radical direct actionists have been gaining ground with the rank and file in the Labor party at the expense of the more moderate political group headed by Ramsay MacDonald. It is also true that the coal miners are dissatisfied with Premier Baldwin's decision that the basic conditions of work may be altered by the mine owners during the present, government-subsidized "truce." However, neither of these facts, nor anything else in the British situation discernible to American eyes in any way seems to justify the bad case of nerves with which the country is afflicted.

THE American press has given considerable publicity in recent weeks to a report of the Canadian Senate on the railway problem in that country. This report, issued a short time ago, will play a part in the forthcoming general election. Its principal feature is a recommendation that the government-owned Canadian National system should be merged with the privately-owned Canadian Pacific. The government would then guarantee a fixed return to the latter (which would remain in private hands) and if any surplus were left, dividends would also be declared on a reduced capitalization for the Canadian National. Comment in this country, as in the case of the Ontario hydroelectric system, seems more animated by a desire to discredit public ownership than to report the facts accurately. Seldom does anyone mention, for example, the fact that the Canadian Senate is not an elected body. Its members are appointed for life, and it is, in consequence, a club of rich and elderly Tories. Neither of the two chief political parties is in favor of the Senate's scheme, and the chances of its adoption are reported to be slight.

IT IS true that the Canadian National, despite highly efficient management, is not earning dividends on its large capitalization. It is also true that it did not do so well in 1924 as in 1923. This was because of the serious decline in traffic in 1924, particularly in bituminous coal, wheat and lumber. The wheat crop in 1924 was far below normal, a condition which will not prevail this year. However, earning dividends on investment is not the sole, or even the most important, function of a railway. The lines of the Canadian National are a necessity to a large part of the Canadian people, and government operation was undertaken partly for the purpose of keeping the trains running whether they paid or not. If the system were to be returned to private hands tomorrow, either service would be discontinued, or it would have to be maintained through subsidy or a large increase in rates. The latter course would probably prove ineffective, since there is a law of diminishing returns which speedily sets in when shippers and travelers are overcharged. Even the Canadian Senate recognizes this necessity for subsidization in one form or another. That fact makes it all the more interesting to see its report, which definitely offers guaranteed earnings to the Canadian Pacific, hailed in the United States as being a step away from government interference in "private" business.

THE explanation that the action of the State Department in withdrawing a passport from Mr. Saklatvala, a delegate to the Interparliamentary Conference, was due to representations by the British authorities, has a certain antecedent probability

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that renders it unpleasantly plausible. In the first place it is unlikely that any one in our State Department knew anything about Saklatvala or his speeches in the House of Commons, and we are sure that Ambassador Houghton is not such a fool as to lodge information. The British government does not of course care twopence whether Saklatvala talks communism in America; they possibly would rather have him do it here than at home, but they are used to it anywhere. They are extremely averse to having the wrongs of India brought into discussion in this country, and it is Mr. Saklatvala's speech in the House of Commons on this subject which is cited against him.

SOME of our readers will remember that immediately after we entered the war the leading Indian revolutionists in this country were arrested and charged with conspiring to ship arms to India. Throughout their trial British agents showed a most indecent zeal and our authorities a disgusting complacency. British secret service men directed both the raids of American police and the conduct of the case in court. They brought a dozen witnesses from Indian prisons to testify. The Indian revolutionists were convicted on this tainted testimony, sent to Leavenworth, and served their terms. When they were set free once more British influence was brought to bear to secure their deportation to India. We have no doubt that underlings in the administration today are as much flattered at receiving a suggestion from London as they were seven years ago, and as eager to show their subservience. While the Secretary of State is considering the problem of extra-territoriality and foreign concessions in China he might give some attention to similar humiliations in this country.

PROPAGANDISTS resemble the vast majority of mankind in that they they have no interest in truth as such. They always shout loudly for "the facts"; but what they mean is, that they want facts favorable to their side spread before the eyes of the world, and all others quietly forgotten. An excellent illustration of this principle has been the conduct of some zealous prohibitionists in connection with the report by the Federal Council of Churches. This report, it will be remembered, frankly conceded that enforcement of the Volstead law has been anything but a success in America; and this candid recognition of a truth which is apparent to everyone who keeps his eyes open has caused vast indignation in the ranks of those true-blue reformers who object to any statement on the matter not of a thoroughly roseate hue. While this attitude is easy to understand, it is none the less one which carries with it grave dangers for the cause it seeks to protect. The sooner the drys stop lying to themselves and to other people about the degree of success which has been achieved in enforcement up to now, the sooner will hope of betterment be justified.

The Price of Agreement with France

AT the moment when these words are being written the French and the American commissions are still deadlocked. There is a difference of several billion dollars between the sum which the Americans demand and the sum which the French have offered to pay. Whether or not this difference will be bridged is at best a matter of guess work. But we feel sufficiently certain, circumstances being what they are, that for the present it should not be bridged and that if it is bridged, any possible compromise will delay rather than accelerate the final settlement. It will be a flimsy edifice erected for fugitive and equivocal purposes. Considering the existing attitudes towards the debt by French and American public opinion, the best immediate outcome of the negotiations would be a temporary disagreement. The ensuing postponement of the attempt to reach a final adjustment would give public opinion in both countries a much-needed chance to reconsider the position it has hitherto assumed.

The New Republic has more sympathy with the position assumed by the French than with the position assumed by the American negotiators. The offer which M. Caillaux originally submitted represented a scaling down of the par value of the loans advanced by the United States to France of somewhat over two-thirds. Its total is so much smaller than the totals which our government expected to receive, measured by the standard of its bargains with the other debtors, that most Americans will be inclined to reject it brusquely and even indignantly. Nevertheless it is almost if not quite as much as France can reasonably be asked to pay; and if she proposes to pay more, the American government will purchase the promise of a larger total by accepting a security of inferior value. We sincerely hope that the French commissioners will not, for the sake of obtaining a breathing spell and a loan, pledge the French nation to pay a series of annuities which will in the future put an intolerable strain on its national finance. The problem should be considered in its effect on the lives of future generations of Frenchmen. If the French tried to satisfy the American demands, they would be obliged to make sacrifices incalculably more onerous than the American people made when their government loaned the money. In the long run they will not do it. Yet their failure to do it, after having promised, would injure French national morale and produce friction and ultimately enmity between the two peoples.

As we pointed out last week, the French nation has incurred liabilities during and since the war which it cannot possibly redeem. All of its creditors must lose part of their claims. The question is, how shall the loss be distributed? The decline in the value of the franc has already written off a proportion of the debt which France owes to her own

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citizens larger than the proportion of the American debt which the French commissioners are asking the American government to cancel. Yet large as are the sacrifices that France has already imposed on her domestic creditors, they have not come to an end. The French owners of French national securities will have to surrender for many years at least half the interest which they are now receiving from the state. The only apparent alternative to the voluntary acceptance of this additional sacrifice is a further decline in the value of the franc which would be equivalent to a still more drastic repudiation. The French commissioners are, consequently, not unreasonable in asking the United States to accept thirty and thirty-five cents on the dollar. Considering the probable social and political effects on the French Republic of the losses which the government must necessarily impose on the large number of small French property-owners, it is doubtful whether the United States will ever actually collect as much as thirty cents on the dollar. That they will ever actually collect more seems to us incredible.

The obstacle to a fair permanent agreement is that these facts have been concealed both from the French and the American public. The average Frenchman does not understand or anticipate the privations that he must still undergo as a consequence of the kind of national finance which his government has practiced; and the average American knows only that a debt is a debt and that to all appearances France is much more prosperous than Great Britain. They will both be much more quickly and thoroughly disillusioned if the negotiations fall through than if they succeed. In the event of failure it will be impossible for the French government to postpone the day of reckoning by negotiating further loans. It will be obliged in that event either to undertake a policy of deflation, economizing and higher taxation or else allow the franc to slide down hill; and if the decline of the franc is resumed the people at least will begin to understand the actual and inevitable dangers and sacrifices which are hanging over themselves and their Republican constitutional government. It will then not be long before the American people will also understand.

The route to such understanding is by way of the failure of the present negotiations. If the two commissions agree upon a compromise which the French government will sign only for the sake of postponing the confession of its actual bankruptcy by borrowing a few hundred millions more, the politicians of the two countries will necessarily enter into a conspiracy to conceal the facts from their own peoples for another few years. The success of the loan will demand an attitude of optimism in Washington towards French national finance which, as the subscribers to the loan will eventually discover, the facts do not warrant. Another vested interest in perpetrating the prevailing illusions will be created which will in all probability have to be protected by the borrowing and the lending of still more money.

In the meantime the French government will not be obliged to deflate and to accept the responsibility for those drastic measures which are indispensable for a balanced budget. It will continue to gamble on the amount of its reparation receipts from Germany. When these payments fail, as they will fail, to fill the yawning chasm of the increasing deficit, the whole structure will collapse; and the economic, political and social effects of the collapse will be more serious than they would be if the costs of deflation were voluntarily assumed now. It would be a mistake, consequently, for the American no less than the French commission to compromise expressly for the purpose of averting the social and political consequences of disagreement in France. Serious and even dangerous as those consequences promise to be, they cannot be avoided. They are only the consequences of an ultimately inevitable revelation of the truth. Sooner or later they will have to be faced. After they are faced it will be possible to negotiate an agreement about the debt between France and the United States which will be based on France's actual ability to pay and which may well prescribe payments even smaller than those which the French commission has recently offered.

The Strategy of Progressive Politics

ON another page of this issue Prof. Lindsay Rogers challenges the past and present strategy of progressive politics in America. In his opinion progressives are contributing to the defeat of their own purposes by focusing their efforts on the election of presidents rather than congressmen. Owing to the spotty distribution of their vote, it would be entirely possible for them to collect in the lower House a bloc of twenty or thirty members which they could wield as an effective weapon of agitation and warfare. The progressives would then become a political group which was organized to make a continuous effort towards a steady increase in numbers. At present all they can do is occasionally to explode ineffectual political firecrackers. Only by such a change in strategy can the progressive cause gradually obtain a sufficiently wide-spread voting strength to enter a presidential election with some chance of success.

In so far as the strategy which Mr. Rogers proposes is politically available, the New Republic would be entirely in favor of it. He may be right in insisting that if a really powerful national progressive party is to be developed, the progressives must cultivate their existing centres of local popularity and spread out from them into neighboring hostile territory. But the practical obstacles to the adoption of this course are much more serious than Mr. Rogers is disposed to admit. No doubt the

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apparently realistic plan of operations for a progressive minority, which is particularly numerous in a few neighborhoods, to attain political power is to focus their efforts on the election of congressmen rather than a president. Yet they have never adopted this obvious strategy, and before we attribute their lack of success to negligence or stupidity and advise them to adopt other tactics, it would be well to consider carefully why they have never interested themselves in the election of congressmen.

The policy of the LaFollette organization in Wisconsin during the present fall indicates clearly enough why the proposed strategy has never been adopted. When the late Senator LaFollette accepted the Progressive nomination for the presidency, he and his associates who controlled the official Republican party of his state were apparently caught irretrievably outside the party breastworks. It looked as if they would have to organize a new party and to devise a political strategy which was adapted to that end as the best chance of assuring their political survival as a group. They did, however, nothing of the sort. After the Senator's death they calmly resumed preparations to recover their former privileges as the regular Republican machine of Wisconsin; and Mr. LaFollette's son had no difficulty in being nominated as the official candidate for senator of the party which his father had labored so valiantly to destroy. The consequence is that the LaFollette organization, although its candidate for senator remained scrupulously loyal to the progressive platform of last year, cannot effectively coöperate with any systematic attempt to elect candidates to Congress who are running as members of an independent progressive party and are committed to the policy of organizing such a party. It can help individual candidates who are personally progressives to be elected either as Republicans or Democrats or as neither, but it cannot, as the strategy proposed by Mr. Lindsay Rogers demands, concentrate its labors on the success of third party congressional nominees. Although it is the most powerful progressive group in the country, it must, as the Republican machine of Wisconsin, devote its energies chiefly to the consolidation of its independent local position as a progressive Republican group.

In invoking the analogy of growth of the British Labor Party in favor of his argument, Mr. Rogers does not attach sufficient weight to the radical differences between the British and the American political machinery. British parties exist technically for the selection of members of Parliament. But the election of members of Congress is one of the smaller tasks of American parties. Their primary job is not to elect any federal officer, although, of course, they rise and fall according to their ability to elect a president. But the source from which they derive their indispensable nourishment is the political power which is exercised by the states. During three years out of four the state rather than the nation or any legislative district is the effective unit of the American political system. Politicians who wish to keep political organizations alive in spite of their inability to elect a president simply must control one or more state political machines. As the actual or possible rulers of a state, they possess both a legal and a practical status in the operation of American government which they could never obtain by their control of a score or even fifty congressional districts. That was why the LaFollette organization in its effort to survive after the severe defeat of 1924 devoted its first efforts to a recovery of its former power in its own state. As long as it remains the legal Republican machine of Wisconsin, it possesses an impregnable political stronghold. But as one member of a progressive national committee, which labored chiefly to elect a few scattered congressmen, it would have wasted its strength on building and holding a few weakly fortified and garrisoned outposts in an enemy's country with which it could only with difficulty maintain communications.

It is the existence, the independence and the importance of this state political machinery which is the worst obstacle to the gradual building up of a national progressive party. The power of progressivism depends on the increasing recognition or acquisition by voters of interests or convictions which will provoke them to risk their present associations and privileges for the benefit of legislative and administrative experiments. A movement towards progressivism must be national in its scope and organization. It requires the friction, the momentum and the communicative enthusiasm of a national agitation to generate sufficient popular enthusiasm and conviction. Between the years 1905 and 1918 it looked as if one of the two older parties might possibly adopt and consequently nationalize a progressive policy, but first one and then the other after glancing in that direction finally refused. These parties do not exist to carry out policies. They consist essentially of groups of politicians, associated for the purpose of controlling the political machinery of the states. In relation to state politics, the old party labels are of decisive importance. The election laws presuppose party government and accustom the voters to act and think politically, not as independent citizens, but as Republicans or Democrats. The interest of the voters in progressive ideas, which flares up now and then and here and there, is always extinguished by their inability either to overcome the inertia and hostility of party politicians or to dispense with the assistance of these politicians and their machinery. Progressives seem to have no alternative but to try out even with insufficient preparation the tour de force of a presidential election. Mr. Rogers's proposed strategy takes no sufficient account of this difficulty.

It is for this reason that the New Republic has become sceptical of the possibility of any effective progressive political agitation in America until those economic groups whose interests are not served by

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the existing business man's and property owner's government recognize the need of the organized and persistent counter-assertion of their interests as workers. The reign of Republicanism, tempered by that of the southern Democracy (which is Republicanism with a different set of local interests and prejudices) will continue until some alteration of economic conditions takes place which will arouse a majority of the American people to demand the kind of radical progressive legislation which the Republican and Democratic machines will not supply. When this day comes, the progressives will not find it difficult to devise a successful strategy, but until it comes no plan of campaign, however realistic it may be, can supply the present lack of a motive sufficient to overcome the resistance. The soldiers in the progressive army are either temporarily discontented groups or amiable but intermittent enthusiasts. They are not, like their opponents, enlisted for the duration of the war. They are continually running home to visit their sweethearts or gather their crops. They will postpone permanent enlistment until they realize that the domination of the government by the acquisitive classes will, unless it is resisted, deprive the American worker of his political and economic independence.

How soon such permanent enlistment will take place will depend upon circumstances which are unpredictable, but in the meantime a progressive who is waiting on this event for the opportunity of realizing his political convictions will have some compensations for his exclusion from active political power. He will be in a better position to enjoy the comedy of American politics than if he were himself furiously engaged in electing insignificant or impotent political leaders to offices on insincere and meaningless platforms. An unusually diverting comedy it promises to be. The two major parties insist that progressives, if they wish to share in the exercise of political power, must wear the collar of Democracy or Republicanism. By this insistence they maintain their own dual monopoly, but they also force many leaders to pose as Democrats or Republicans who for one reason or another are out of sympathy with the party aims and methods and who destroy the peace and unity of the party's domestic life. The more the two older parties consolidate their monopoly under existing conditions, the more impotent they become as effective agencies of government. The significant conflicts now occur within rather than between the parties. The progressive may well be content for the present to confine himself to scrutinizing inquisitively and dispassionately the development of this political burlesque. He can, of course, participate in party politics on occasions if issues which seem important to him come to the surface, but for the most part he will have his mind sufficiently occupied in watching the unfolding of the comedy and in studying its dénouement. Its meaning will not be easy to understand, particularly by those who participate actively in it, because it is a decaying system and may either suddenly collapse or else rot away. Yet just because it is decaying and yet unable to reform itself, it is particularly in need of being understood so that when its end does come it will be succeeded by a more liberal rather than a more violent alternative.

Syndicated Venality

MORE than one writer has remarked, in recent years, on the striking changes which are being brought about in journalism through the increasing reliance upon syndicated material. Nearly all telegraphic news is nowadays supplied by one or another of the great agencies; routine local news in the large cities is gathered and distributed in the same way by coöperative bureaus; comic strips, cartoons, photographs, fillers, uplift essays for the editorial page, household hints, "columns," book reviews, Sunday magazine sections, all are turned out by the cubic yard in New York and published simultaneously in Oshkosh and Omaha, Kankakee and Keokuk, Minneapolis and Miami. Cut off their title-lines, and the most loyal native son cannot tell the Bingville Bugle from the Gallopolis Gazette. The bored transcontinental traveler who descends at stations along the line and purchases the local journals might be pardoned for feeling that his train is traversing long loops which bring him invariably back always to repurchase, at the same place and from the same boy, the same paper.

Syndication, to be sure, is not without its bright side. If a fine local flavor has departed, so has some needless provincialism. It is perhaps hard on the budding author in Medicine Hat who wants to try his sprouting wings in the columns of the local Clarion, to find that all the available room for his sort of thing is taken up by Dr. Rank Bane; but his fellow townsmen not improbably welcome the fact that each day they get the services of a crew of writers and artists whose combined annual salaries are $3,000,000 or so, instead of the volunteered verses of Susie Minchin, entitled Welcome to Our Dear Pastor Back from Vacation, which were read with great success Friday night at the box social of the Second Methodist Church.

In the midst of this smothering avalanche of canned journalism, one newspaper department long stood firm-anchored as the unyielding rock: the editorial page. The articles appearing thereon have frequently been terrible, but they have been the editor's own—or at least, his wife's or his maiden aunt's, or the aspiring reporter's. Every editor, however modestly incompetent he may feel in all other departments of the paper, is yet eaten up with the inward conviction that as an editorial writer he is a combination of Frank Cobb and Henry Watterson, retaining the best features of each and adding several merits of his own. The sheer bulk of dull and needless comment on the world's affairs,

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couched in platitudinous, bad English, which any one of these gentry has been in the habit of turning out in the course of a single day's efforts is almost beyond belief. Even in the exceptional case when he has not burned with the sacred fire himself, he has accepted the tradition that editorials should be numerous, voluminous and home-grown.

One uses the past tense, sadly, because of the melancholy conviction that these idyllic days are departed. Syndication, like the worm i' the bud, is invading even the last citadel, the editorial columns themselves. Only a few days ago a leading journalist took occasion publicly to deplore the fact that his confrères are beginning to purchase their opinions wholesale, f. o. b. New York, from editorial canning factories. These require only to know whether you want the Republican XXX brand, or Flower of the Mill Democratic, and whether you wish them stiffened with A. No. 1 Rigid Reaction (In Storm and Stress It Proves the Best) or warmed with Progressive Paprika: (Recommended for One-Cent Dailies—Gets 'Em and Keeps 'Em). What sort you order is a matter of indifference, since the same factory crew works on all assignments.

The change for the worse when Ye Scribe abandons to alien and indifferent hands the privilege of pointing out as to strikes that The Public is the Real Sufferer, and as to disasters on sea or land, that An Investigation Is Needed, is too obvious to need more than mention. There is, however, in all seriousness, another aspect of the question which is of genuine importance and has possibly escaped some of the editors involved. We refer to the likelihood that the canned editorial service may be dishonest, furnishing disingenuous propaganda in place of honest comment, and receiving pay from other sources than the editors who purchase its outgivings for their columns.

We say that this is a likelihood; in one instance, at least, we have good reason to believe that it is a certainty. From a reliable source we have received a file of circular letters sent out by a newspaper service which is engaged in supplying precisely the sort of editorial material to which we refer. These letters tell their own story as briefly and better than we could summarize it. The first one runs:

> Gentlemen:
>
> Any interesting information about your organization, extent and nature of the membership, the program, date and place of the next convention and any news stories likely to be of wide interest would be appreciated by us.
>
> The ..... Editorial Service supplies the editorial comment for over a hundred daily newspapers throughout the country and we sometimes give widespread publicity to national organizations when supplied with interesting material.
>
> Very truly yours,
>
> ..... Editorial Service.

This polite hint was followed up shortly by a letter speaking plainer language:

> Gentlemen:
>
> A happy circumstance provides a most unusual opportunity for nation-wide newspaper publicity for the work of the ..... through an editorial on the subject.
>
> In this timely editorial direct and effective mention would be given to any facts to which you wish to give widespread publicity, with the aid of interesting information you could furnish on the subject. I am able to guarantee to obtain publication in at least thirty-five daily newspapers throughout the country at a total cost to you of $350. Marked copies of the papers would be furnished.
>
> The ..... Railway Co., the ..... Co., the ..... Works, the ..... Co., the ..... Association, ... Inc., and others have found this service the most effective means for nation-wide publicity of the best kind.
>
> Timely interest in the subject has created this opportunity for one organization. Timely action will capitalize it for you.
>
> Very truly yours,
>
> .....

That these promises are not idle talk is indicated by an accompanying testimonial from a satisfied customer, which reads:

> We are pleased to inform you that your publicity service is giving very fine results. The material is well written and you are obtaining publication on the best pages of many leading papers of the country.
>
> . . . Our members were impressed by the large return obtained for the slight expenditure. We can recommend your service without reservation.

We do not say, of course, that all services offering syndicated editorials are guilty of the same venality. Neither do we suppose that the managers of this one are necessarily able to deliver all that they promise. It is impossible to believe that the editors printing this service know its true character; and it is only reasonable to suppose that men capable of lying to one set of their clients are also capable of lying to another. Even so, the attitude revealed is one which, added to the other arguments against the canned editorial, should make any newspaperman worthy of his salt resolve to have nothing to do with any such enterprise.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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China and America at Johns Hopkins

THE setting was the new campus of Johns Hopkins University—American classic, colonial buildings with their inevitable suggestion of historic ideals of enlightenment and freedom. The personnel was carefully representative of the strands which bind America to China, the missionary, the commercial and industrial, the political. China itself was present—a score of students representing that mingling of Eastern and Western culture to which, in spite of the proverb which says that "never the twain shall meet," the world looks for the solution of its greatest problem. These students, accepting quietly the rôle of guests and maintaining always their attitude of self-effacing reserve, could not fail to remind the gathering of their comrades who have become the leading force of the Chinese people, and who, shot down in the streets of the foreign concession of Shanghai, had really called the Conference.

We depend much today upon the formal, official relations of nations maintained through accredited representatives who draw up protocols and treaties, contract loans, arrange tariffs, promise mutual protection. The note of scepticism in regard to Chinese backwardness in such matters was often heard in the Conference, regret that China had not a "stable government," doubt lest her recognized central authority should "walk out" on any agreement made, or lack the power to enforce its provisions. But there was revealed, dimly and obscurely perhaps, a power more deeply grounded than official governments—the people. An American diplomat, ex-minister to China, was present to emphasize this higher diplomacy—the dealing of nation with nation directly, through contact and sympathy. A Chinese professor politely recognized the anxiety of his hosts that China should have "a stable government," but pointed out that to the Chinese in their internal life this was not so essential a matter as it seemed to the West—that the texture of Chinese society which had endured through four thousand years was too strong to be torn apart by the rivalry of the tuchuns. And the American President of Peking University testified to the importance of the psychological element in the situation. China is governed by public opinion; this public opinion was outraged by the shooting down of Chinese on the soil of China, while demanding freedom and equality among nations; it has been rendered suspicious by delay and exasperated by the failure of the nations concerned, with the exception of Japan, to make any gesture of sympathy or offer of reparation. The only way to meet the situation is to win the respect of the Chinese by "fearless friendship." No one can doubt that it was in the spirit of friendship among peoples that the Conference was called and carried on.

The Conference was primarily a study group, concentrated for three days on aspects of the situation of China with reference to the Western world. The ground for the discussion was laid out with extraordinary thoroughness by the preliminary circulation of bulletins, articles and bibliographies dealing with the chief phases of the subject. The Conference was extremely fortunate in the presence of a large number of men and women of long experience in China, of some whose permanent interests are there, and of others who are specialists in some departments of Chinese life. There were Mr. Charles R. Crane, former U. S. Minister to China, Provost C. K. Edmonds and Professor W. W. Willoughby of Johns Hopkins University, Bishop Logan H. Roots of Hankow, Professor G. Roorbach, of the Harvard School of Business Administration, Dean Frederic E. Lee of the University of Maryland, Professor Paul Monroe of Columbia University, Dr. Royal Meeker, of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, President Ellen F. Pendleton of Wellesley College, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, Miss Julia Lathrop, Mr. Owen F. Roberts and Mr. Donald M. Brodie, of the China Society, Representative Stephen G. Porter, Dr. R. E. Diffendorfer of the Methodist Episcopal Board of Foreign Missions, Mrs. E. H. Silverthorn of the Federation of Women's Foreign Mission Boards, Dr. William E. Strong of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Dr. A. L. Warnshuis of the International Missionary Council, Miss Agatha Harrison of the Y. W. C. A., James A. Thomas, formerly Vice President of the China-American Bank of Commerce, Professor J. P. Jenks, former financial adviser to the Chinese government, President J. Leighton Stuart of Peking University. The Conference was further fortunate in the presence of such Chinese as Alfred Sze, the Chinese Minister to Washington, Professor P. W. Kuo, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Education in China, Dr. Clarence K. S. Young of the Chinese Legation, and the group of students.

The Conference was not made up to secure harmony and unanimity—rather the contrary. There were many shades of opinion among the delegates. The points of opposition were necessarily the maintenance of extra-territoriality and the foreign concessions, and the regulation of Chinese customs by the Powers. The Chinese view was set forth in the proposals drawn up by their representatives and read by Mr. Young on the first day of the Conference. He said:

> The Chinese people ask for full, specific and immediate restitution of our tariff autonomy and abolition of extra-territorial rights

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> I say "full," because we shall not be satisfied with merely a part; "immediate," because a remote promise will necessitate more definite promises in the future; "specific," because general assumptions of conditional obligations usually have proved futile.

These outspoken demands were challenged. What was meant by immediate? Whatever it meant, it was asserted that the Chinese were asking for too much, that China was not ready to take advantage of such concessions, and it was reiterated that such unreadiness was "her own fault." Questions were raised as to the revision and codification of the laws of China, and the possibility of putting the new code into effect. It was urged that with the abolition of extra-territoriality, business based on such provisions would collapse and disorders would occur, leading to sporadic interference and intervention on the part of the Powers. Further, it was feared that the effect of the abolition of foreign control of customs would be to put money into the hands of irresponsible military leaders. A leading representative of the business group pointed out, with most transparent good faith, that it was no disgrace for a country to pledge its customs revenues ("it is done every day in New York") and no disgrace to permit foreign administration of them.

To such objections it was replied that if the Chinese central government was weak and the military leaders strong, this result might be due in part to the action of foreign interests and powers who found their profit in such confusion. It was suggested that if Russia could abandon extra-territoriality and special concessions without sacrificing her position in China, other nations might make the same venture. The industrial situation in China was given a thorough and illuminating treatment in one of the last sessions of the Conference. The difficulty was made clear of industrial regulation with some establishments under Chinese law, some under the laws of the state or nation to which their owners belonged, and some under the municipal control of the concession in which they were situated. As to the word "immediate" in the Chinese demands, the Conference was reminded that the principle of extra-territoriality had been condemned by treaties as far back as 1903. In the give and take of debate the honors easily went to Dr. Kuo. With a fulness of information in regard to things Chinese, relieved by a certain cosmic merriment which is the Oriental equivalent of Olympian calm, he met and repulsed all doubts and queries. When the old argument in favor of the concessions turned up, that they serve as cities of refuge for Chinese officials, (and particularly for a certain ex-president who had grown exceedingly rich in office) he came back with the suggestion that the convenience of such sanctuary was perhaps one reason why Chinese officials were corrupt. When it was urged that the agitation over the treaties was diverting young China from the real work of setting its house in order, he countered with the remark that the abolition of the foreign concessions was precisely the way to release attention to domestic matters.

With a gathering so representative and carrying in its membership so much weight, it was natural that there should be a desire to arrive at some conclusions and give some effect to its authority. It was clear that to have proceeded by resolutions would have been wasteful of time. Such resolutions would have been challenged word by word, and the discussion would have spent itself on form rather than on substance. Nevertheless out of the exchange of views a certain large consensus of opinion undoubtedly appeared. This consensus received satisfactory expression through the report of the round table group on the peculiar opportunity of the American government in the present crisis, read by Dr. Warnshuis of the International Missionary Council. This report stated agreement that "extra-territoriality should be abolished and custom autonomy should be given to China." It admitted disagreement as to whether these concessions should be granted "by one stroke" or "by progressive stages," and recognized the necessity of the expert treatment of such matters by the Customs Conference meeting in Peking on October 26 and the Commission on Extra-territoriality meeting on December 18. The report further expressed the opinion that the "United States government should take a position of vigorous leadership in these international negotiations . . . and press strongly for the agreement of all the Powers concerned in order that all of them may faithfully . . . carry out the promises and programs which were outlined in those treaties and resolutions adopted in Washington in 1922." It pointed out that among the signatory powers there are five which have important interests in the Pacific and in China—China herself, Japan, Great Britain, France, and the United States. "We hope," the report added,

> that our government will most earnestly and in the most effective way possible endeavor to secure the agreement of these five powers in carrying out the recommendations which will be made by the Conference in October and the Commission that meets in December. At the same time we think our government should have the firm purpose of acting independently if it is found impossible within a reasonable time to secure the concurrent action of these other four powers.

This final recommendation undoubtedly represents the most radical position taken by the majority of the delegates. Throughout the discussions there was a general air of confidence and optimism, expressed by no one more buoyantly than by Dr. Kuo. At the same time there was an underlying sense of the urgent necessity of forthright, decisive, unmistakable action. At the opening session this note was struck by Mr. Crane who, admitting the desirability of acting in concert with other powers, emphasized the responsibility of the United States to stand

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alone, in view, as he said later, of "the danger that a century of the best kind of work between America and China may be lost." It was this sense of the imminence of the crisis, and of their responsibility in the face of it that led the delegates to insist that the Conference should not close without giving its judgment. To have failed to do so would have opened the way to serious misinterpretation of the attitude of America toward China which the Conference was called to represent.

That this attitude is one of genuine friendship the Conference made clear. For the people of the United States this friendship for China may easily prove to be spiritually the most valuable of our present possessions. In these post-war days of material and social reaction, China affords an opportunity for a generous faith, for disinterested help on the part of the American people, such as revolutionary Greece gave to Europe in the years after the Napoleonic wars. Some sense of this, perhaps, touched with warmth and enthusiasm even the formal proceedings of the Conference. There was something singularly uplifting in the spectacle of the association of China, with her four thousand years of memories, and America with so few. Sentiment aside, however, the result of the appearance of the Chinese representatives at the Conference was a firmer belief on the part of the Americans that they could trust China. And when again and again the speakers for missionary organizations, responsible for millions of money and thousands of lives in China asserted, with the concurrence of the men in the field, that they were willing to renounce all special privilege and protection, and rely on Chinese justice and good faith, the Chinese present must have felt that there was likewise an America which they could trust.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Progressive Half-Preparedness

SINCE the presidential election last November the New Republic has published many articles and editorials dealing with "progressivism" in American politics. It has not minimized the difficulties which a third party must overcome, and it has presented a rather gloomy picture of the immediate future.

Unless, says Mr. Croly, progressives in England and the United States "understand the reason for their voting inferiority and subordinate their agitation for temporary political victory to an energetic and artful leavening of the processes and motives whereby public opinion is formed, they will remain permanently at a disadvantage" (Dec. 10, 1924). The struggle is now between economic groups, and "organized society is almost unanimously arrayed against" the radical group. Success in the future will depend largely upon "ability to precipitate issues and start ferments in British and American public opinion which will broaden and intensify the present limited demand for intellectual honesty, moral integrity and humane ideals in politics."

To the suggestion of Prof. William Orton that an American Farmer-Labor party is not possible for the reason that American labor, unlike its British counterpart, has little class identity and consciousness, the New Republic replies that this judgment underestimates "the disintegrating effect on the old individualistic homogeneity of American life of the increasing tendency of Americans to gather into functional groups" (March 11, 1925). The educational preparations necessary for the success of a third party "may occupy the life of a generation. In the meantime the best way to accelerate its slow pace and relieve its monotony is by carrying on political effort and organizations in association with economic effort and organizations" (July 15).

There are doubtless few persons who would accept these generalized statements without reservations; but, at the moment, their essential truth or falsity need not be in question. The point I wish to make is that to concentrate on the necessity of long continued argument and education is progressive preparedness which is at best only half-preparedness, and which may indeed distract attention from the fact that political victory in the United States depends upon local organization and manipulation. Of course the New Republic realizes that politics is an intricate business and that organization is necessary. The great defect of the campaign was the "lack of trained workers and of the funds to supply them with munitions." In the future progressives "may make their position on current issues known, not by bird-shot propaganda, but by continuously functioning organizations in the local political districts" (Nov. 26, 1924). The trouble with these suggestions, however, is that they are considered of incidental rather than of primary importance. It is not realized that the quickest way to build a national party is to consolidate local successes, and that the leavening education which is necessary will come most easily if attempted for classes and sections as well as for the nation as a whole.

In other words the progressive movement in this country attaches too much importance to a general staff and the broad principles of political propaganda. It underestimates the necessity of strategy. It is primarily concerned with the issues of the battle and pays inadequate attention to placing troops and munitions in particular terrains, shifting them to where they are most needed, and concentrating on limited but attainable objectives. It is preoccupied with the hope of a single, smashing victory. It

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fails to see that the battle may be more easily won if the start is made from objectives that have already been taken. Successes in guerilla warfare will facilitate, and may be prerequisite to, the rout of the enemy. From this point of view the congressional elections of next year are of great importance. They will afford opportunities for the capture of a certain number of limited objectives. If they are taken, so much will be gained, but if not, the call for volunteers in 1928 will be no more adequately responded to than was the call in 1924. The failure to see that through congressional victories lies the shortest, if it is not the only, road to national importance is the half-preparedness of American third-party advocates.

It is the more surprising since American progressives have before them the achievements of British Labor. The New Republic has frequently cited the fact, but without drawing the moral. Two Labor members were elected to the House of Commons in 1874 but by 1900 only fifteen seats were contested and only two successfully. The total vote for the country was 62,698. In the eighties and nineties there was some coöperation between Labor and the Liberals, and fourteen Labor-Liberals in the House of Commons marked the high tide of this accommodation. The rise of the Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labor Party forced the dissolution of this arrangement. The Fabian Society, founded in 1883, had ten years later seventy-four local branches and most of these were absorbed by the Independent Labor Party. In 1900, on trade union initiative, the Labor Representation Committee was formed. Six years later it became the Labor Party—a federation of socialist societies, trade unions, trades councils, local parties, and coöperative societies. Its success appears from the following table:

General Election	Seats contested	Members returned	Labor vote
1906	50	29	323,195
1910 (Jan.)	78	40	505,690
1910 (Dec.)	56	42	370,802
1918	361	57	2,244,945
1922	414	142	4,236,733
1923	427	191	4,348,379
1924	514	151	5,551,549

These figures are eloquent evidence of the fact that strategy has been considered of paramount importance. Only in the last three elections has the Labor Party begun to contest the 200 rural constituencies where the Conservatives are strongly, and as yet, almost impregnably intrenched. The beginnings were made in those areas which promised a fair measure of success. From the mining sections of the country an almost solid labor bloc is returned to the House of Commons. Effort and money have been expended first where they would count for most. The bare results by no means suggest the tremendous attention to planning and detail. It would repay American advocates of a third party to study a report of the Annual Conference of the Labor Party. The results in each constituency are carefully analyzed. The statistics and reports of agents show the chances of victory or defeat. One of the most illuminating sections is a dry table of candidates, and the organizations which finance their contests in particular areas. The Independent Labor Party, the Social Democratic Federation, different trade unions, the Fabian Society, sectional labor parties, the coöperatives—all appear as furnishing munitions of war to candidates of their own membership or choice and to constituencies in which they are particularly interested. There is scant overlapping or duplication of effort and little energy is wasted. There is a general staff, but the activities are oriented locally; the money is spent with a pretty good idea of the probable returns for the outlay.

There are, of course, some difficulties in the way of copying British strategy for American politics, but they do not seem to be insuperable. American congressional constituencies are much larger and the task of organizing and contesting them would be greater. But this is a difference of degree rather than of kind, and there are about 200 fewer districts than in England. The forms of government are different. A bloc in the House of Commons may, on account of the balance of other parties, be essential to enable the Prime Minister to form a Government, as the Labor bloc in 1910 was essential to Mr. Asquith. In England, also, where the executive comes from Parliament, it may be possible for a minority party to form an administration as did Mr. MacDonald in 1924. A bloc in the American Congress is not so powerful. Under our form of government too much depends on the prize of the presidency. A bloc in Congress may simply make a deadlock more likely.

Yet the election of a few radical members to the legislature would be an important gain. Even though impotent numerically they are bound to influence the program and tactics of the more conservative parties. The present Conservative government, for example, however great its shortcomings, is more progressive in home affairs and more willing to consummate the radical spadework of the other parties than it would be but for Mr. MacDonald's government and the presence in the House of Commons of the Labor Opposition. For this purpose a congressional bloc is more potent than an academic quadrennial agitation in presidential elections. A few third party representatives in Congress would focus and accelerate educational processes, and, as I have said, would provide a stable foundation for a national organization.

The prospects of such successful tactics in American politics are far from gloomy. The results of the LaFollette candidacy have been analyzed, but largely, I think, to show what happened and the extent of the failure, instead of to show what the outlook is for a strategy which would concentrate

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on favorable areas and utilize local economic and political organizations. It has been pointed out that the LaFollette vote was greater than the Democratic vote in twelve states: Wisconsin, (in which LaFollette had a majority); Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, and South Dakota (in which the combined Democratic-Progressive vote exceeded the Republican vote); and California, Iowa, Minnesota, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming (in which Coolidge had a majority). In these twelve states the LaFollette vote was 36.4 percent of the vote for all candidates; the Democrats polled only 9.1 percent. But the important thing is to discover those areas (smaller than states) in which LaFollette ran first or second, and this has been done by my colleague, Professor Arthur W. Macmahon, who has analyzed the results by counties. *

> Wisconsin aside, the Senator carried only one county —Clinton, in south central Illinois—east of the Mississippi river. He ran second, however, in twenty-five counties in Illinois, in twenty in Michigan, in ten in Ohio, in nine in Pennsylvania, in two in New York, and in one in New Jersey. The location of these counties is suggestive. Most of the number in Illinois and in Michigan clustered near the Wisconsin boundaries—across the whole northern part of Illinois with the exception of Cook and Lee counties, and in the upper peninsula of Michigan.
>
> A second striking concentration followed the intensively industrial belt along the shore of Lake Erie from Wayne County, Michigan (containing the city of Detroit) to Chautauqua County in New York. The pivot of this area was Cleveland, which indeed LaFollette actually carried in what was his outstanding urban victory.
>
> A third area centred around Allegheny County in Pennsylvania and embraced much of the manufacturing district about Pittsburgh. Minor areas of interest were Hamilton County in Ohio, containing the city of Cincinnati, and the two counties just across the Ohio River in Kentucky; Monroe County in New York, with the important city of Rochester; and Passaic County, a textile region in New Jersey.
>
> In nearly every one of these areas some influence had been at work in advance of the campaign, preparing at least the raw materials of organization, like the long standing movements of social reform and labor leadership in Cleveland, the constant efforts at organization on the part of the Farmer Labor party in northern Illinois for over five years, the unusually strong interest of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor under Mr. Maurer in politics, and in Rochester the movement which at the same election returned Mr. Jacobstein to Congress with combined Democratic and Socialist endorsement. The spotty character of the LaFollette vote in the East was not accidental.

Even in the South LaFollette ran second in sixty-eight counties. In the eleven states in which he was second, he carried 157 out of 559 counties. In Minnesota he carried forty counties as against Coolidge's forty-seven; in North Dakota he carried thirty-five as against Coolidge's eighteen, which were, as is obvious, the more populous ones; in Nevada he carried seven as against Coolidge's nine. In Oregon, on the other hand, LaFollette carried no counties at all. Fourteen (out of fifty-eight) counties were carried in California where the LaFollette candidacy was compelled to depend upon the Socialist list of presidential electors. In other words, the third party established a primacy in certain areas, (other than Wisconsin) and this in spite of the predominantly timorous and conservative temper of the country and the wretched strategy of the campaign. In the House of Representatives there are three Farmer Labor members, one Socialist, and one Independent.

These facts seem to me to indicate the advisability of third party advocates concentrating on local contests for Congress. Trade union and agricultural organizations would be more willing to put up money for contests in which they were interested and in which their own candidates might run. Some of the considerations that the New Republic adduces as militating against the immediate success of a third party—timidity of voters, reluctance to sanction attacks on property—would be less potent in congressional than in presidential elections. The areas in which LaFollette ran first or second are fertile soil for congressional contests. Such a strategy could at first ignore the South and rural New England. It need not interfere with, although it might not approve, the tactics of the American Federation of Labor in giving its blessing or its curse to particular candidates, and the attempts of certain local organizations to capture the machinery of one of the parties. This strategy would gain instead of lose by reason of the complexity of our political machinery, whose many checks make it difficult for political discontent to find expression. Congressional polling booths are less sound proof than the presidential ones, and they are open every two years. We have had ten congressional elections while British Labor has fought its seven battles, and these seven are probably more than it will have in the next eighteen years. Local contests, moreover, would postpone for a time the necessity of agreement upon all the details of a national party platform, and such a strategy as I suggest would have two additional advantages.

"The fatal objection to Socialism has always consisted in the personal disqualifications of Socialists to act as the efficient agents of a social program; and the same disqualification exists in the case of the progressives. The only way in which they can overcome this handicap is to associate with their economic and group activities an appropriate educational discipline" (New Republic, March 11, 1925). It is also true that the handicap can in part be overcome by the local political successes which would result from a new orientation of policy.

* Political Science Quarterly (Supplement) March, 1925, Record of Political Events, pp. 51-58.

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Winston Churchill's famous gibe that British Labor was "not fit to govern" would have been more accurate if there had not been a strong Labor contingent in the House of Commons, and if many Labor members had not had experience in local government bodies. The country had become accustomed to third party participation in the legislature; it was, therefore, not unduly alarmed at third party participation in the executive.

Finally, concentration on local contests means a much greater interest in and support of the political principles and purposes of a third party. As one of my English friends wrote to me during the general election last autumn:

> The rank and file of Labor pays for its political beliefs. In the Oxford constituency, the local Labor Party has fought (and lost) two elections since last May. [There was a by-election in June, 1924, the Labor candidate polling 2,769 votes out of a total of 21,000; the proportion was about the same in the general election, October, 1924.] The Party has raised among its members—few and not rich—£630. How is it done? Pennies collected on cards; threepences and sixpences; a few guineas; collections at meetings; jumble sales, etc. My wife was busy all last week collecting discarded clothing and oddments which on Saturday were sold and realized sixteen pounds. That is how it is done.

This, be it remembered, was in a constituency which the Labor candidate has no chance whatever of carrying. But in this spirit and organization is to be found the secret of British Labor's political success. These local activities encourage the unity of policy and spirit which American progressive groups last November were unready and unwilling to achieve. British Labor Party evangelists cry in the wilderness but they take account of topography and avoid impervious thickets. Since the wilderness is large they rely on many voices. The soloists and their tones differ, but the chorus is effective.

LINDSAY ROGERS.

Viscount Grey on War Guilt

AS everyone knows, the devastating revolutions that accompanied the close of the World War tore open the secret archives of Germany, Austria, and Russia, and let a flood of dazzling light in upon the hidden sources of the great armed conflict. For seven long years, scholars have been at work with microscopes and X-rays examining, comparing, tabulating, and commenting. Propagandists have likewise been busy using the findings for political ends. Though the cautious will shrink from conclusions too sharp and dogmatic, all must admit that one thing has been established beyond question, namely, that responsibility for the War must be distributed among all the participants, with Russia and France each bearing a Titan's share. Pelted with the astounding documents flung into their faces by the restless searchers, Poincaré, Sazonov, and a host of minor prophets began to explain; and the more they explained the deeper they got into a bottomless morass.

Spectators in the orchestra circle have long been waiting, therefore, for the appearance of Viscount Grey who directed English foreign affairs from late in 1905 until near the close of 1916. They fairly trembled with excitement when several months ago he began publishing his memoirs in a London journal and they will now be delighted to have the complete story in convenient form.* Those who expected, however, that the noble lord would take up the huge bill of indictment brought against the Entente by critics of every school and answer them one by one will be disappointed in this record. The Viscount undertakes no such Herculean task. On the contrary, he merely surveys once more, in the light of the old Entente pretensions, the origins of the understandings with France and Russia, the Algeciras crisis, the Persian adjustments, the Bosnia-Herzegovina affair, the diplomatic rôle of Edward VII (which seems to have been no rôle worthy of mention) the Agadir uproar, the Balkan war, the final crash, and the diplomacy of the Allied Powers until Grey's departure from the Foreign Office. These episodes are all treated in the large—without much reference to what France, Russia, and Serbia were actually doing behind the scenes. The ticklish points, such as the relation of the Serbian government to the Serajevo murder, are handled in the old style. In fact, the Viscount is concerned only with general situations. At one point, he grows so expansive that he assigns the solution of one problem of war origins to "a discussion on belief or disbelief in Divine superintendence and the reign of Moral Law in human affairs"; but just as the reader's attention is arrested, the matter is dismissed with a remark that "this would be too great a digression here."

Warned, perhaps, by the fate of others, Grey does not descend very far into particulars. Poincaré explains and explains; Grey tells us and then adds firmly that we may take it or leave it. That is his mode; and fortunately for the reviewer, the noble lord puts his whole case in a few words on one page:

> I was not only ready, I desired, to be on good terms with Germany; but the increasing challenge and men-

* Twenty-five Years, 1892-1916, by Viscount Grey of Fallodon, K. G. Two vols. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. 683 pages. $10.

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> ace to Great Britain of the growing German naval program was an adverse influence on British feeling towards Germany. It also had the effect of making French and Russian friendship seem more than ever desirable.
>
> Meanwhile German policy tests the friendship with France. There is no choice but to sacrifice this friendship, or to strengthen it and to prepare for the contingency of supporting France against a German attack. This is done, but Britain remains unpledged; and when Europe is on the brink of war in 1914, British opinion, official and other, is divided and uncertain. Then the German invasion of Belgium pushes the British Empire wholesale into the war.
>
> This, I believe, is the main and central truth of British policy and action, and whoever does not accept it and looks for the truth about us elsewhere is failing to understand British psychology; moreover he will make mistakes about us in the future.

Charmed by Grey's ingenuous spirit, one might put aside all the work of Fay, Ewart, Morel, Pevet, Montgelas, Marchand, Barnes, and the whole army of searchers, and accept this simple explanation of the origins of British participation in the war, if the noble lord did not himself on other pages hint that the matter was not so simple after all. On page 90 of Volume I, he says that in his view:

> The military power in Germany chose the time and precipitated the war; and had there been a real will for peace in Germany, there would have been no great European War arising out of the Austro-Serbian dispute. But though all this be true, it is not in my opinion the real and final account of the origin of the Great War. The enormous growth of armaments in Europe, the sense of insecurity and fear caused by them—it was these that made war inevitable.

On pages 53 and 54 of Volume II, the Viscount shows how one nation after another increased its armaments during the years previous to the war, always protesting peaceful intentions; and then he adds:

> Finally, Germany became afraid that she would presently be afraid and struck the blow while she believed her power to be still invincible. Heaven alone knows the whole truth about human affairs, but I believe the above sketch to be as near to a true statement of the causes of the war as an ordinary intelligence can get in a few sentences.

At one point, Viscount Grey, it is true, seems inclined to lay the blame on Germany for starting the armament contest. He states (II, 54) that after 1870 "Germany had no reason to be afraid," but in another place he remarks that in 1886 there was a belief in England that the Triple Alliance made for stability and peace in Europe against the restless powers, Russia and France (I,8). Again, in 1906, he thought that German military preparations were not made with warlike intention but as "precautions" (I, 88). When we put together all of these statements by the noble lord and add to them the fact that between 1905 and 1914 France and Russia spent for armaments more each year on the average than Germany and Austria-Hungary (a fact that does not seem to be a matter of psychology British or American) then the harassed reviewer may be pardoned for thinking that Viscount Grey's account in reality puts the war guilt on all the European powers or at all events leaves that major problem still unsolved.

If this is so, then how did England get into the quarrel? The reviewer may be forgiven if he confesses to some confusion in his psychology as he reads the words: "Then the German invasion of Belgium pushes the British Empire wholesale into the war." In other parts of the book Viscount Grey declares that England would have been drawn into the war in any event, that even in 1906 British opinion was so pro-French that it would probably have justified the Government in intervening then on the side of France in case of war, that the English cabinet promised naval aid to France before the invasion of Belgium in case the German fleet began action in the Channel, and that he himself would have resigned from the cabinet if England had not gone in with France in 1914. Again in the diplomatic documents, the reviewer observes that Grey refused to consider the question of remaining neutral on condition that Germany stay out of Belgium. Does it show a defect in psychology to admit that after a careful study of these memoirs it is not clear whether the noble lord thinks the invasion of Belgium was a decisive factor in carrying England into the war or any factor worthy of consideration except on the "wholesale" principle?

Equally troublesome to the reviewer is the question of the obligations—promises, suggestions, assurances or whatever they may be called—inherent in the conversations with France and Russia between 1906 and 1914. Viscount Grey says that after eight years of negotiation—during which France and Russia made military and naval dispositions on the basis of expectations—"Britain remains unpledged." And yet he prints here a letter to Asquith, dated September 8, 1911, stating that "it would create consternation if we forbade our military experts to converse with the French. No doubt these conversations and our speeches have given an expectation of support. I do not see how that can be helped." In his speech of August 3, 1914, Grey told the members of the House that they were free to decide "how far that friendship entails obligations," but Grey—the one man in England who knew all about the exchanges with France—construed them as binding England to come to the aid of France and he would have resigned if Parliament had construed them otherwise (I, 303). That is perplexing. If Grey, who directed the secret negotiations, felt that England was honor bound to come to the aid of France, how then could it be truly said that England

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remained unpledged? That may present no problem in casuistry to British psychology, but some allowance must be made for mentality of a lower order.

The concealment of these understandings—or whatever they were—from Parliament and the English people likewise gives Viscount Grey no trouble as a problem in psychology. He tells us that if they had been made known and that if requests had been made upon Parliament for adequate military support, the Government would have been compelled "to tell the whole truth" (II, 55). As a matter of fact, he adds, "conscription and a great Army, in addition to a supreme navy, were politically impossible before the war" (II, 58); if, however, England had started to build up a big army, the war would have been precipitated sooner (II, 57). But Parliament was restive and wanted to know about things. For instance, in June 1914, while English and Russian naval officers were preparing plans, Grey was asked in Commons whether any naval agreement with Russia or any negotiations relative to such an agreement had recently been undertaken. Grey replied that there were no unpublished agreements that would hamper the government and that no negotiations to that effect were in progress. In these memoirs, Grey declares: "The answer given is absolutely true. The criticism to which it is open is that it does not answer the question put to me. That is undeniable." When the Russian documents came out in 1919, Grey's critics accused him of something akin to a falsehood. The noble lord now turns upon them and points out that his reply was not an answer. That, too, raises a fine question as to how far any statesman is to be held responsible for an "absolute truth" which conveys a false impression. So the story stands: it was "politically impossible" to educate the English people up to preparing for a war with Germany; if they had prepared, they could be accused of precipitating it (II, 57); it was therefore necessary to get them into the war without pledging them or preparing them. If that raises no problems in British psychology, then doubtless an American had better keep silent.

On the whole, Viscount Grey, in spite of the obscurities in his text, sticks to the old thesis as to the immediate responsibility. The deciding power in Germany was the military party, he argues, and the said party decided on war in 1914. Then he goes on to say that "German diplomacy was expected to do what it could to make it appear that the war guilt was with someone else." Would it be irrelevant to ask whether English diplomacy or French or Russian diplomacy might have been at least faintly tinged with that desire? In a word, it seems that Grey regards the efforts of Germany to avoid war (efforts now well known to students if not to Viscount Grey) as dishonest attempts to lay the guilt on others. But there is Russian mobilization. Ah, yes; the noble lord has thought of that too. He disposes of it in short form: "After the veto of a Conference, with Austria mobilized and Germany ready to strike, what counsellor could have honestly advised the Tsar that mobilization in Russia was a premature, unnecessary precaution?" Perhaps Grey may be pardoned for not knowing that mobilization, according to the understanding of French and Russian military men, meant war. Grey is a diplomat, not a soldier. Yet he has misgivings about his explanation. In a figure of speech, he adds: "Perhaps it may be true to say of Russia, that she was like a huge, unwieldy ship, which in time of agitation, kept an uncertain course; not because she was directed by malevolent intentions but because the steering gear was weak."

Naturally that part of Viscount Grey's memoirs which deals with America will arouse the most interest here. The picture which he gives of Walter Hines Page is rather reserved. He says that Colonel House combined in "a rare degree the qualities of wisdom and sympathy," but he passes no such encomium on the nominal ambassador. He thought that Page was an idealist; perhaps because he understood the ideals for which Britain was fighting. The genial man of letters, who after happy hours with a gracious dowager enthusiastically wrote home to President Wilson that American democracy was about to annex the British Empire, either awakened no warm admiration in Grey or, if he did, the fact, for tactical reasons, is concealed. What Grey says about Page confirms the ambassador's own account of himself as working eagerly, first, to help the British government evade skilfully the demands of the State Department at Washington and, second, to bring the United States into the war on the side of Great Britain.

Far more significant is Grey's account of the negotiations with Col. House in 1916 and President Wilson's conditional plan for taking the United States into the war at that time. The President proposed to Grey through House that a peace conference should be called, and added that if Germany refused to attend "the United States would probably enter the war against Germany." House also suggested, with Wilson's approval, that Belgium should be restored, Alsace and Lorraine transferred to France, Russia given an outlet to the sea, and Germany compensated by colonial concessions. If, however, the Allies delayed too long in accepting, then the United States would probably stand aside completely. In view of the Secret Treaties by which the Allies had already divided the spoils in advance, it is not surprising that England and France did not agree to the calling of the conference.

The most extraordinary feature of Viscount Grey's whole survey is the practical indifference shown to anything outside of the British Empire that does not impinge immediately and obviously on British interests. It throws no new light on the origins of the war. It merely illuminates the char-

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acter of its distinguished author, a diplomat of singular charm, a man who according to these pages eagerly desired to serve the cause of peace, honestly and conscientiously, as far as it could be done within the limits of British security and prosperity. For that reason an air of sadness pervades these volumes and leads one to reflect on the vanity of things.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

To a Gentleman

WHO WANTED TO SEE THE FIRST DRAFTS OF MY POEMS IN THE INTERESTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH INTO THE WORKINGS OF THE CREATIVE MIND.

So you want to see my papers, look what I have written down
Twixt an ecstasy and heartbreak, con them over with a frown.
You would watch my thought's green sprouting ere a single blossom's blown.

Would you, friend? And what should I be doing, have you thought of that?
Is it pleasant, think you, being gazed upon from feet to hat,
Microscopically viewed by eyes commissioned just for that?

Don't assure me that your interest does not lie with me at all.
I'm a poet to be dissected for the good of science. Call
It by any name, I feel like some old root where fungi sprawl.

Think you, I could make you see it, all the little diverse strands
Locked in one short poem? By no means do I find your prying hands
Pleasure bearing and delightful straying round my lotus lands.

Not a word but joins itself with some adventure I alone
Could attach consideration to. You'd wrench me flesh from bone,
Find the heart and count its tappings. At your touch, 'twould turn to stone.

What is I, and what that other? That's your quest. I'll have you know
Telling it would break it from me, it would melt like travelled snow.
I will be no weary path-way for another's feet to go.

Seize the butterfly and wing it, thus you learn of butterflies.
But you do not ask permission of the creature, which is wise.
If I did consent, to please you, I should tell you packs of lies.

To one only will I tell it, do I tell it all day long.
Only one can see the patches I work into quilts of song.
Crazy quilts, I'm sure you'd deem them, quite unworthy of your prong.

One must go half-way with poets, feel the thing you're out to find,
Wonder even while you name it, keep it somehow still enshrined,
Still encased within its leafage like an arbor honey-vined.

Lacking just this touch and tremor, how can I but shrink and clutch
What I have to closer keeping. Little limping phantoms, such
Are my poems before I've taught them how to walk without a crutch.

You mean well, I do not doubt it, but you're blind as any mule.
Would you question a mad lover, set his love-making to rule?
With your pulse upon his finger, watch him play the sighing fool?

Would he win the lady, tell me, with you by? Your calculations
Might frustrate a future teeming with immeasurable equations.
Which will prove the most important, your research or his relations?

Take my answer then, for, flatly, I will not be vivisected.
Life is more to me than learning. If you clumsily deflected
My contact with what I know not, could it surely be connected?

Scarcely could you, knowing nothing, swear to me it would be so.
Therefore unequivocally, brazenly, I tell you "No!"
To the fame of an avowal, I prefer my domino.

Still I have a word, one moment, stop, before you leave this room.
Though I shudder thinking of you wandering through my beds of bloom,
You may come with spade and shovel when I'm safely in the tomb.

AMY LOWELL.

Summer Sky

God, that a sky should be as blue as this,
As grave and beautiful and filled with light
For those far-faring birds whose way it is
To lose themselves at last in lonely flight!
And yet, so much my own, so dear, so dear
Is all a summer sky may be or do,
That though I shut my eyes it still is here,
As beautiful as ever, and as blue.

There, with its hidden stars, its lonely birds,
And here in me, no less, by day, by night,
Aye, even in this poem as I write,
Spreading its blue again above these words—
So that I half-expect, as day declines,
To see the stars look out among these lines.

DAVID MORTON.

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A Letter to Elinor Wylie

DEAR Madam,

It is now two years since you were so kind as to send me the first of your novels, which the vexation of other business and the exigences of other studies then prevented me from reading. It has, in the meantime, been your reproach, that, whereas you, a year ago this autumn, were prompt to be present at and eager to applaud my tragedy (a kindness, I must confess, uncommon), I have allowed another year to pass without troubling to open your book; and that, though, on the publication of your first poems, I was among the foremost to commend them, my enthusiasm for your genius has so far abated that I have been willing to neglect in private what I have forborne to notice in publick. Let these complaints now cease: as I have offered in excuse of my protracted delay the constant press and perplexity of my affairs, so now, receiving your second novel in a moment of tranquillity and leisure, I have taken the opportunity to prove my candour by a careful perusal of both.

Of the first, it may now seem too late to say much, as it has already been abundantly praised. It was your habit, at the time when I had not read it, to call to my attention the extravagant eulogies which had been lavished upon it by Mr. Van Vechten and Mr. Van Doren; but of these two criticks, the first is of so particular a taste as to render him insensible to the beauties of many works, and those among the greatest; so that whatever falls in with his humour obtains the suffrage of his judgement; and the second, like the sun of tropical latitudes, which sheds its warmth all the year around, diffuses his mild benignance upon the excellent and the unworthy alike, till, by its uniformity, it causes us to long for the asperities of more inclement climates. Posterity must, therefore, be as little persuaded by the eloquent caprice of the one as convinced by the universal patronage of the other; and it should be enlightening to the publick, as it must be gratifying to you, for me to add my commendation to theirs. The merits of Jennifer Lorn must command a respect far beyond what we are accustomed to accord to light tales of this species, which, as they are written merely to amuse, do not often move us to admire. We are as much instructed by your knowledge of mankind as delighted by your felicity of invention; and amazed no less by the brilliance exhibited in the splendours of the style than by the vigour displayed in sustaining them. Of the character of Gerald, it may be said that our literature affords no more ingenious, and, at the same time, no more dreadful, illustration of the truth, that the most polished taste and the highest accomplishment may coexist with selfishness and cruelty; and the exercise of great abilities have for accompaniment the contempt of religion. Nor, though you stimulate us at first to admire, do you fail at last to provoke us to despise, when one who has commenced as an Atheist, is finally shewn as a thief.

Your second novel, The Venetian Glass Nephew,* now remains to be examined; and it will not be surprising if you have not found it possible to repeat so remarkable a success in so short a time. I must say first that your choice of a subject seems less happy than in the case of its predecessor: your ignorance of the Italian language and your lack of acquaintance with the country to which it is native have rendered your scenes, on the whole, less natural and easy than in Jennifer Lorn. If you reply that a full third of the earlier tale is supposed to have taken place in Persia, a country of which you know even less than you do of Italy; I must answer that, as Persia, like Arcadia, is a country of which no one knows anything, we may be free, without fear of reprehension, to write anything of it we please; but that, in the case of Venice, we are certain to have among our readers many persons who have been there, and whom it will displease to find the scenes inappropriate or the manners reported inexactly. I must object further that you have mingled the fictitious with the real in a manner hardly allowable; in as much as, though introducing such actual and known personages as Count Gozzi and Cardinal de Bernis, you have juxtaposed to them an imaginary character whose name is a paraphrase of Casanova's and who, though in some cases spoken of in connexion with names that paraphrase those of the impostor's associates, in others is represented as the hero of Casanova's own exploits, such as the escape from the Leads. If you should plead that, since Casanova has left a history of his own life in which its events are recorded with some fulness, and that it would be incredible to ascribe to him an adventure which is not included in that account; I must reply that the same is true of Gozzi, who nowhere mentions in his memoirs the circumstances you relate.

As for the style, though distinguished by elegance and enlivened by wit, which no production of yours can fail of, I fear that the imagery has here become so copious as somewhat to impede the progress of the action. Where we are bewildered by the profusion of the trees, we become incapable of perceiving the forest. Your story is obscured by a luxuriance of phrases, which seems less suited to a novel than a poem, where exfoliation of this kind is more easily accepted; and we are forced to conclude, when we have reached the end, that the plot has not been very carefully contrived. Our attention is directed first to the Cardinal, but we presently discover that he is not among the chief actors; then we are entertained by a long conversation between the Cardinal, the Chevalier and the Count, which occupies a good third of the book, yet appears to lead nowhither, and to accomplish no purpose which might not have been accomplished better in briefer space. If the style would be more suited to a poem, the same may be asserted of the matter, which, involving so much that is supernatural and whimsical, would not invite in verse the same scrutiny to which it must be subjected in a novel, where we are less content to admit the vagueness of fancy or the abstraction of allegory.

> Indignatur item privatis ac prope socco
> Dignis carminibus narrari cena Thyestae.
> Singula quæque locum teneant sortita decentem.

What is here said of the styles of tragick and comick poetry, must with even greater reason be applied to the more dissimilar styles of poetry and prose.

Of the fable itself, it can only be said that, if it is to be taken literally, it is absurd; and if allegorically, licentious. That a young woman should be converted into porcelain by a ceramical calorification, even with the assistance of the Devil—this is a conception as repugnant to reason as it is monstrous to imagination. But we should prefer the extravagances of childhood to the corruption of maturity. Remember, Madam, that the progress of age, in which I am so much further advanced than you, should bring, not, as we grow accustomed to the spectacle

*The Venetian Glass Nephew, by Elinor Wylie. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.

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of vice, a cynical indifference to virtue; but a more scrupulous attention to morality and a determination to leave no line which could offend it, as we approach more closely to the awful Judgement Seat before which we must all one day stand. I am, dear Madam,

Your most affectionate humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON (per E. W.)

The Vortex

The Vortex, by Noel Coward. Henry Miller's Theatre. September 16, 1925.

FEW people interested in the theatre have failed to hear, as a part of his publicity if not otherwise, that Mr. Noel Coward is still young, several years under thirty in fact, that he has lately had three or four successes in London, and that his talent ranges from serious plays to comedies and even to musical entertainments like Charlot's. This prodigious plausibility, this aspect of a young wonder in the theatre, may mean much or mean little, save in one respect. It guarantees a theatrical gift. And the theatrical proves to be at least one undebatable achievement in The Vortex.

The Vortex is theatre whatever else it is. As a play it belongs to a familiar type; but it is not stale. It is of the school of Bernstein with his trim theatrical excitements, of the school of Pinero's Second Mrs. Tanqueray with its serious implications however profound; but it is not copied or derivative in its detail or in its mood. The Vortex, as you see it played, declines slightly at the end, very little however and perhaps not at all if the hero's part were in the hands of a more powerful and secure actor than Mr. Coward. But it is absorbing always and always entertaining. It is not profound, not a great play certainly. But through this high spirit and gusto of the theatre that it has, it is delightful and exhilarating. It has that test of the theatrical, which is exhilaration; you sit it through engaged and quickened. Where slighter things might leave you indifferent because their nuance and point is only literary, and where deeper things might move into ultimate philosophy and the eternities but leave you dull, The Vortex keeps you going from first to last.

The story deals with a son and a mother, a woman past her prime, whose life has grown foolish with her vanity and her amours. Her famous beauty and love affairs have retarded her development into the qualities that would adorn herself and preserve her relation to her family. Her husband has long since left off competing with the state of things. Her son is in Paris writing music. She has a lover much younger than she is, she clings to all the old vain ways. The son comes home engaged to a girl, clear, downright, frank by the well known modern recipe for young ladies. Everyone goes to the country house for the week-end. The son's fiancée and the mother's lover turn out to be old friends. To both of them it is plain that they belong together, not in their present bonds. The son sees the mother's vapid absurdity, with her young lovers, her ignored family and her plastered and desperate beauty. Her degradation, even, appears and a shocking frenzy, when the break with her lover comes. In the last act the son visits the mother in her room, forces her adulterous confession from her, confesses to her in turn his own drug habit. The terror of each one for himself and for the other beloved being becomes the theme through which their redemption is to be accomplished. The play ends with mother and son in each other's arms.

The Vortex is one of those plays that are by no means actorproof. It demands a company and a director that can bring out the values, keep the rhythms flexible and persuasive, and the realism convincingly close to life. Fortunately Mr. Basil Dean has directed The Vortex expertly, the players are all adequate and often admirable. Miss Auriol Lee as Helen Saville, the mother's intimate friend, and Mr. David Glassford as the father, could scarcely have been better. Miss Lilian Braithwaite's Florence Lancaster, the vain, confused, foolish, but somehow forceful woman, capable of more than she has allowed herself to become, was a fine piece of acting, remarkably firm in its outline and always convincing.

The least compelling performance of all, considering its possibilities, was that of Mr. Noel Coward as the son. Mr. Coward is more an artist than he is an actor. He is capable of excitability rather than a dramatic range of emotion. His time sense is good. He understands readily and fluently what the scene means and what must be done, so that we understand and are entertained. But he illustrates rather than creates; a good deal of his performance is sensitive description, not acting. Or even if you take him as identical with the character, take him actually as being this wretched young artist and as really feeling what the artist is supposed to feel, in sum, if you take that last scene in The Vortex not as theatre at all but as happening in real life there before your eyes, you would say then that Mr. Coward is one of those persons who may feel their emotions, may even be shattered by them, but cannot sufficiently isolate them so that they carry to us and fill our beings and stir and move us to relive them.

The Vortex has better dialogue than any English play that I have seen in several seasons, better for instance than Galsworthy's Loyalties or than A Bill of Divorcement or the Milne plays; its dialogue is more supple, more idiomatic and more variously speeded up. It is more genuine and less tricky than the French Bernstein, with much more purity of intention and far more of something that derives from youth, you may call it reticence, genuineness, innocence, poetry, or whatever it is that contrasts with the hard vitals of a well advanced Parisian success. And The Vortex has contrivances that are unforgettable: the moment in the last act when the mother and son stand at the open window and look from the brink of their own ruin out across the quiet of the starlit fields; the picture of the mother and son together toward the very last—not quite heedless of the closet scene in Hamlet; the appearance on the scene of the lonely, baffled husband and father; the frantic piano playing at the second curtain when the son sees his mother's scolding and bawling and whimpering after her lover; all these are fine theatrical images.

I find myself asking—somewhat ungratefully after so much entertainment and the sight of so much talent—why The Vortex is not a great play. The question is really larger than that; in every art there are works that are so good in every part, in theme, in composition and in execution, that we wonder why they are not better. The answer is either some dogmatic generality or else deals with a feeling that is vague but unescapable. The subject of The Vortex is serious; it appears to express itself completely. Is such a play, then, really about what it is about? Is there a facility of excitation and fluency of expression that are complete as far as they go but that stop at the point where the artist finds nothing further to express or feel, though this point is a long way from the essential depths of the matter? Or what shall we say? Nobody

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but the most ardent of spectators would call The Vortex, for all its merits, a great play; but to say why it is not so would involve the whole nature of art. It is more worthwhile to consider the many short scenes—that where the lovers break their engagement, for one instance—that are so well done, little entities so perfect in themselves, so shaped and finished, thumbnail sketches set here and there and beautifully achieved.

STARK YOUNG.

The Higher Alcohol

A RAPID survey of the latest issues of some of the periodicals devoted to special branches of the social sciences shows an interesting new trend, or, to put it even more categorically, tendency.

Among the numerous analyses of this tendency, or trend, to appear, by far the most analytical was a, for it, unusually intelligent article, of not less than 10,000 nor more than 50,000 words in the Chair Car Monthly, which our readers will recognize as the organ of the Observant Pullman Riders' Association. The writer of this article confessed himself an experienced traveler, with a record of 131 Transcontinental trips and a yearly average of five days out of every week spent in chair, lower, diner or Pullman smoker. Certainly a graduated, probably a qualified, possibly a certificated observer. At any rate, one well worth listening to. And this is what he says:

Nine out of ten bootleggers, before they reached that high estate, had never occupied a lower, nor ridden in a Pullman, nor put up at any hotel charging more than $1.50 a night for bed-and-hatrack. In other words, the vast majority of illicit drink providers were men of low culture—great strong silent simple creatures, their pristine strength undiluted by civilized amenities. Men, we are safe in affirming, with souls untouched by art. At least, not until the touch of many dollars has softened them and lowered their resistance to art. For art follows the dollar, as trade the flag, as pneumonia the wet feet. The bootleggers were doomed from the start, doomed as soon as they set foot in the Pullman. But let our unnamed Observer tell the story in his own words:

"I have travelled a great deal, and rubbed elbows with and lent cigarettes to all sorts of people, and I know a bootlegger when I see one. I have travelled with these gentry many thousands of miles, and have watched the same story happen over and over again. . . . First the brash young bootlegger, with new yellow shoes, with a diamond stickpin the size of a monkey-wrench and just as beautiful. In the smoker this bird will open his grip and give you a sample drink, which tastes as if your tongue had stepped on a third rail. Nothing smooth about the drink, and no art in the man. . . . I have run across these same specimens six months later, and Lord what a change. Slick and beautiful and oily-spoken. Only a valet could dress them like that. The stickpin has gone, and so have the yellow shoes, but there's still something wrong with the cut of his jib; people hesitate in the aisle to size him up, and he knows it and feels mighty uncomfortable. . . . But give him another six months and the fruit is ripe. He has caught on. He's not flashy, but he's not like everybody else. Art is the only word that will describe it. The art of speech, of clothes, of eating; he no longer calls people 'brother,' he has learned to quit ordering two steaks at once, and if you look at him in his green plush swivel chair you'll see that his legs are elegantly crossed and that he is reading, not a magazine, but a book. Think what that means! A bootlegger reading a book. It's the greatest social change of the decade. . . .

"But the most curious thing of all is how such changes come about. All bootleggers who do any travelling are affected in the same way. I was in one of the smaller Middle-West art museums once, and came upon a prosperous-looking individual gazing at one of the El Grecos. I thought I had seen his like somewhere before, so I accosted him. 'I don't know much about art,' he replied, 'but you can guess the rest.' Very soon he allowed he was a bootlegger, and at the end of a long and friendly chat he had given me a most interesting slant on the mental and æsthetic evolution of his profession, which I consider it my pleasant duty to pass on to the rest of the world.

"All over the country the taste of bootleggers, not only in their own wares, but in more delicate matters, is improving by leaps and bounds. They are now the only class which is consistently wealthy enough to travel in Pullmans, sleepers, and to stop at luxurious hotels. From this point to a genuine interest in art is only a step. Take your impressionable young bootlegger now. He enters a Pullman for the first time in his life, and this first impression is overwhelming and lasting. He enters it from a crude world of ugly street-cars full of advertising matter, a world where he has been able to afford to ride only in jitneys, broken down 1917 Buicks constructed without ornament and maintained without any genuine sense of beauty. From this world he is plunged into the most sumptuous and sombre interior, a veritable rolling cave of art. The floor of this palace car is covered by the softest carpet of a most luscious green, and the chairs are daintily upholstered in plushy material to match. If the bootlegger leans back, his head rests upoh an antimacassar of rarest lace, autographed in old-point, blue-point or tatting with the Pullman arms and lettering. He gazes at mysterious landscapes, wonderful Union stations through pellucid panes of purest crystal. The woodwork, which in time he learns to call boiserie, is strictly oak, of a high and very beautiful finish, and a little higher up his eye may rest on some brief but none the less successful efforts at stained glass. I have known sensitive bootleggers, after their first trip, to emerge from the Pullman incurable amateurs of Chippendale, Bokhara rugs and French Cathedrals, and to lead thereafter lives of a culture and illumination denied to the rest of us, cut off as we are from Pullman Travel by the prevalent poverty."

A wise observer indeed, and one who has seen strange transformations. But his view of the matter is solely that of a traveller upon Pullmans. Of the influence of the newer hotel upon the bootlegger he tells us nothing. For such light we must turn to yet another organ, a fortnightly, read secretly but widely, by the name of Higher Alcohol, which is the voice of the more progressive and responsive bootleggers. On page thirteen we find the following suggestive comment:

"A friend of ours, one of the most successful and high class beverage merchants in the North, does more business in expensive hotels than anywhere else. We suppose that eleven months of his year are spent in a suite on the ninth floor of the ten-dollar-a-day caravanserai. But for two reasons, so he writes us, he is about to take to other channels. For one thing, our friend complains that the guests at these hotels are more and more exclusively composed of members of his own fraternity, and that the activity

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of a luxurious hostelry consists chiefly of beverage merchants taking in, as it were, each other's washing. But far more serious than this merely economic factor is the moral and æsthetic one. Our friend spends his time in surroundings of the greatest beauty, such as cannot but have their effect on any man's soul. He finds himself drawn toward a life in which spacious lobbies, gorgeous chandeliers, furniture in the style of every Louis and Charley, platinum elevators, illuminated parchment lily-cups shall have a permanent meaning. Next year he plans to go to Europe, where obviously he won't be able to do any business. When he comes back, we suspect it will be to enter some other line, for his last word to us is the complaint that 'This Statler art is getting me.'"

ROBERT LITTELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

Addresses Wanted

SIR: May Days, the Masses-Liberator Anthology of Verse 1912-1925, to be published this fall by Boni and Liveright, will contain about three hundred poems, numbering nearly two hundred poets. With the exception of the seventeen listed below, the addresses of the vagrant two hundred have, after much difficulty, been run to ground. Will you extend me the courtesy of your space to notify these uninformed of my intentions; and in a general way, to request their permission?

Seymour Barnard, G. B. Birrel, Francis Biddle, Mac Knight Black, Stanley Boone, Elizabeth Colwel, Ralph E. Goll, Floyd Hardin, Will Herford, Annie Higgins, Sara Hammond Kelley, Florence Ripley Mastin, Charles Oluf Olsen, Gen. Isaac R. Sherwood, Lizinka Campbell Turner, Esther A. Whitmarsh, Miriam Vedder.

Any communication concerning the poems should be addressed to me.

New Preston, Conn. GENEVIEVE TAGGARD.

The Wastes of Advertising

SIR: Mr. Stuart Chase in his article on The Wastes of Advertising which appeared in your issue of August 19 takes the stand that nine-tenths of modern advertising is largely competitive wrangling as to the relative merits of often undistinguishable compounds and that therefore virtually all advertising is an economic waste.

Does it occur to Mr. Chase that he is here criticizing not advertising but the organization of society on a competitive basis, and that unless and until society can invent a superior form of organization, advertising is an essential economic force, promoting large scale, efficient, comparatively inexpensive production and distribution as against small scale, inefficient and costly methods?

If Mr. Chase wishes concrete examples of the effects of advertising in improving the quality of advertised products and at the same time maintaining or lowering prices to the public, he will find them in the fourth chapter of Principals of Advertising by Dr. Daniel Starch of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration.

From the testimony of twenty-nine leading advertisers there quoted, "it would seem that the prices of none of these commodities were raised on account of the advertising, but rather, on the other hand, in the case of a large majority, either the price was reduced or the quality improved, or both."

Can Mr. Chase show us a practicable method by which society for a yet lower expenditure, can achieve equal results in economies of production and distribution, which will yield, at the same time, as advertising does, a by-product of such enormous educational value as the daily and periodical press, two-thirds of the revenue of which comes from advertisers?

PEREGRINE ACLAND.

New York, N. Y.

The Ways of the Flapper

SIR: I see that Flapper Jane "has a hunch" that maybe people have always been excited about "wild youth." Perhaps she would be interested in what Emerio Crucé thought as far back as 1623. In his book Nouveau Cynée he proposes that the state take over the censorship of morals and the control of education:

> Now that the fear of paternal punishment is taken away, and the children free themselves to such an extent that they lay down the law to their parents—the Republic must undertake this change. . . .

I believe Flapper Jane is right—the younger generation is always going to the devil—but of course instead of going there it only goes into middle aged conventional respectability. But perhaps that is just the way to go to the devil!

CARL BECKER.

Ithaca, N. Y.

SIR: Mr. Bruce Bliven tells us about Flapper Jane, and why she is taking her clothes off so fast. I won't say that Mr. Bliven has got mixed up in his arguments, but will be polite and say that the flappers who gave him his material are mixed up. He tells us (1) that the flappers are taking their clothes off because of "just honesty"; that is, "dragging in this strange-allurement-stuff doesn't seem sporting. It's like cheating in games, or lying." And then he tells us (2) that she paints her face "for an altogether artificial effect—pallor mortis, poisonously scarlet lips, richly ringed eyes—the latter looking not so much debauched (which is the intention) as diabetic." Now will some flapper explain how these two things go together?

No, no. Let me explain the flapper to herself and to Mr. Bliven. She is a product of a parasitic civilization. Even when she earns her living, she earns it by socially predatory occupations. Consequently she is degenerating, and she has a fondness for all things suggestive of decay—pallor mortis, debauchery, *and* diabetes. Money obtained by parasitism will be spent for vanity, folly, and luxury—that is a law of Nature, and written across the pages of all human history.

And lest some poor flapper think this is a letter from a male prude, let me add that it is from a man who would gladly agree with his fellows, both men and women, to go naked in all weathers from this day forth, and let all perish that could not stand it. He looks forward to a naked civilization—but the girls in that world will have real blood in their cheeks and real beauty in their hearts, because they will be earning the equivalent of everything they consume, and earning it by socially necessary labor.

UPTON SINCLAIR.

Pasadena, Calif.

[If Mr. Sinclair knows anything less calculated to deceive than painting the face purple and pearl, I wish he would name it.—B. B.]

Secretary Wallace and the Farmers

SIR: In your issue of September 16 on page 100 Mr. Covington Hall states that the late Secretary of Agriculture Henry C. Wallace favored the sacrificing of farmers to industry. This is absolutely untrue. Time and again Secretary Wallace deplored the building of great cities at the expense of our agriculture. You will find this brought out in some detail in the book which he wrote and which was published shortly after his death, Our Debt and Duty to the Farmer. It was this fundamental difference in viewpoint which caused Secretary Wallace to come in conflict with a number of the views of Secretary Hoover. Continually month after month and year after year, Wallaces' Farmer has continually set forth the danger of our nation becoming predominately industrial and depending in large measure on food shipped in from across the sea. It is very hard, therefore, to find Mr. Hall giving a totally false impression of where Secretary Wallace stood on this matter.

H. A. WALLACE.

Des Moines, Iowa.

No More Subways

SIR: Your editorial, No More Subways, in the New Republic of August 26, seems to have hold of a valuable idea from the less valuable end. Maybe it is all right to use the method of limiting transportation facilities, to secure a cessation of the overcrowding of Manhattan. Unfortunately, subways or no subways, the building of tall structures, housing more and more offices and factories within small area, continues, and the existing subways become increasingly inimical to health, safety, and manners.

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The concentration of the people during the business day must be checked if relief is to be had; but even with it checked, additional subways or other transportation will be needed to care for the existing congestion.

The sole chance of effectively checking the congestion and its increase lies in a revolutionary measure: Prohibit all building of over ten stories below Fifty-ninth Street. That will force a spreading of the business areas, as the city increases in size. The spreading thus caused can go only eastward or westward; there are still opportunities for building transportation lines on the avenues at the east and west edges of Manhattan Island.

Until a positive check to the root of the trouble is applied, we have only the choice between overcrowding on existing subways or overcrowding on new ones also. The root is the piling of offices and factories too many layers deep; and the solution lies in preventing this malpractice in the future.

STEPHEN G. RICH.

Verona, N. J.

Study as a Mode of Worship

SIR: That beautiful piece of writing in your July 22 issue, Why the Church, leads me to call to the attention of your readers a pamphlet issued by the Union of the Orthodox Jewish Rabbis. The pamphlet is entitled Study as a Mode of Worship and its author is Nathan Isaacs, Professor of Law at Harvard Business School. A reading of this really enlightening pamphlet will reinforce the conviction of those who have faith in "conscious methodical exploration" as a road leading to a sound system of "adult religious education."

For me, it also affords some insight as to why the Jew, despite looseness of his religious organization, retains and maintains his racial and religious steadfastness. Professor Isaacs demonstrates that for the Jew religious worship is basically a process of education founded on the give and take of inquiry. It thus makes concrete the value of education as a guaranty of the power of religion for good.

The Commission on the Christian Way of Life, it seems to me, has justified its creation and being by bringing to public attention the methodology of inquiry associated with the name of Professor Alfred D. Sheffield, the secretary of its industrial commission. For one thing, it has shown a way to break through murky conception.

It is rather a happy coincidence that both Professors Sheffield and Isaacs, (whose conception as to methods of teaching Law and Business Economics will do much to assure to the Harvard Business School preëminence in its chosen field comparable to that of the Harvard Law School in Law) are on the staff of the Boston Trade Union College.

HENRY WISE.

Boston, Mass.

Day of Atonement

SIR: Reading your review of Louis Golding's Day of Atonement confirms my opinion of book-reviewers in general, and of your policy in particular. Political correspondents review plays and newspaper hacks attempt to fathom the religions.

The Day of Atonement is not only a study of Jewish life; it is a study of Jewish prejudices. It is not a story of "orthodox Jewish life" merely but relates how a Jew becomes a Christian and the resultant conflict. It is not so deep that only Jews will appreciate it, as your reviewer so glibly writes. I know a Lutheran minister and a young Christian missionary who thoroughly enjoyed the book and discerned the conflict depicted in the hearts of Eli and Lenli better than the reviewer. The claims of Christ are accepted by a young rabbinical student—an orthodox Jew—and his attempt to carry the convictions of his mind to his family and synagogue are repudiated in a storm of opposition. That is the plot.

I believe Mr. Golding has faithfully pictured the state of mind of many so-called liberal Jews today—trying to understand the person and place of Jesus in history and life and responding on the other hand to all the millennial hatred of ecclesiasticism.

Mr. Golding writes me that his own religious conflict and attitude is revealed in the persons of the characters of the story.

It is so hard, however, to review even a novel, if there is a religious element present! It is so easy to burn one's fingers. Especially where the highly sensitive Jew is concerned.

RUSSELL TAYLOR SMITH.

Philadelphia, Pa.

The Necessary Third Party

SIR: Replying to a communication in the New Republic asserting that progressives secure better results through old line party association, it may be well to note that while Mr. Bryan campaigned against plutocracy in 1896, conservatives (Hill, Ryan, Croker, Morgan) returned to the Democratic council table in 1900 and dictated the Parker nomination of 1904; that the Wilson domestic program was overwhelmed by War issues; that the Cox (1920) and Davis (1924) nominations registered reaction; that the Progressive Republican movement of 1912 centred in the Roosevelt personality and dissolved when the colonel suddenly returned (1916) to his former allegiance; that the Taft, Harding and Coolidge administrations have committed the national Republican party to the conservatives; and that now you might as well try to hang the Mississippi River up on a clothes line to dry as to demonstrate successfully that either the national Republican or Democratic party is progressive and can become nationally other than the apologist of the private monopoly system.

The era of reformation of old line parties from within is past. Progressivism returned in 1924 to its original conception as an independent national movement on the basis of fundamental principles. Senator LaFollette, nominated as an independent, made clear the real issue in American politics—freedom of government, industry, and economic life from the control of private monopoly—and that issue will continue, as heretofore, to find expression through certain principles:

1. Public ownership of the complete monopolies—transportation, hydro-electric power, and the means of communication.
2. The shifting of taxation from industry and thrift to monopoly and privilege.
3. Presidential primary, direct election of the president, and national initiative and referendum.
4. A scientific money system.
5. Limitation of the power of the courts over legislation.
6. The programs of the farmer and of organized labor.
7. Progressive foreign policy which will tend to hasten the reign of Law in the world to which civilized man aspires, and checkmate imperialism among the nations.

These principles cannot find expression through the old-line parties. They will, however, create a community of interest and purpose among progressives which will unite for political action those who render useful service by labor, of hand or brain, on the farm, in the shop, in the school room and office. And independent political action on a national scale through a new Progressive (Service) party is imperative—a necessary step forward in the struggle for economic freedom.

ARTHUR G. WRAY.

Whittier, Calif.

Jewish Farmers In Russia

SIR: May I call your attention to one of the most interesting phenomena in human history, taking place right now in Russia?

A whole people is undergoing a complete psychological transformation. The Jews of Russia, traders, merchants, professional men for centuries, are becoming farmers—successfully. Twenty-five thousand of them have already undergone that transformation. In another year 100,000 will have been settled as farmers, and thousands more will follow them.

This is no "inspired" movement, but a spontaneous plunge into a new life by a people whose economic foundations have been cut from under their feet. They must find a new life—and they must succeed, or perish! And the same government which crushes them as town-dwellers, encourages them as farmers, by assigning large tracts of land, by giving them cheap transportation and gasoline and lumber.

At this very moment hundreds of caravans are moving across the Russian prairie to the free lands, as once upon a time, in the days of '49, and later during the Oklahoma and Indian Territory land-rushes, caravans—"covered wagons"—moved in large masses across the American prairie. And every day new colonies are establishing themselves. I saw all this with my own eyes during a recent visit to Russia.

DAVID A. BROWN.

Detroit, Mich.

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After the Peace Conference

The World After the Peace Conference, by Arnold J. Toynbee. New York: Oxford University Press. 91 pages. $1.75.

Survey of International Affairs: 1920-1923, by Arnold J. Toynbee. New York: Oxford University Press. 526 pages. $9.

THE average well-informed reader with an alert interest in the life of his time may well be excused if he is not quite certain in his reply when someone suddenly inquires when the Council of Ambassadors was formed, why the Poles seized Vilna, or what the Spa Conference did about reparations. To be sure, he read all all about these interesting and important events when they occurred; but in the two or three years that have elasped since then, so much else has happened that the details have escaped him. Suddenly something bobs into the news to recall them, and he makes the embarrassing discovery that he has forgotten all about the events of yesteryear, which lie behind this morning's headlines. The editor, no doubt, ought to tell him, but the editor too frequently doesn't. And what if the puzzled man is himself the editor?

Then there is no help for him—or rather, there was no help until Mr. Arnold J. Toynbee considerately wrote his two handbooks, The World After the Peace Conference and A Survey of International Affairs, which will henceforward be indispensable to everyone who is trying to keep an intelligent eye upon the bewildering complexity of this distracted planet.

The historians are usually some ten to twenty years behind the headlines. Current discussion in the magazines covers a period of perhaps six months earlier. In between a great gulf is fixed, out of which past events may be laboriously fished by the industrious use of newspaper files. Now a newspaper file is a bulky, dusty, inconvenient object, and the information exhumed from it is not always reliable when you have got it at last. Everyone who has suffered with the files and everyone who wishes to fill the middle distance in his picture of the world today—and has hitherto wished in vain, for lack of just such books as these—will have good cause for gratitude to Mr. Toynbee.

He describes The World After the Peace Conference as an epilogue to the six volume History of that misguided assemblage which, like these two volumes, was issued under the auspices of the British Institute of International Affairs. And it is also a prologue to the Survey of International Affairs, which is to be the first of a proposed series of annual handbooks, chronicling the history of our world, year by year. Of the two books that Mr. Toynbee now gives us, The World After the Peace Conference is the one most likely to be generally read; while the Survey is certain to take its place on the shelf nearest every desk whose occupant is intimately concerned with the dilapidated world the War has left us.

The World After the Peace Conference is a smoothly-flowing, vivid summary of the planet as the Treaty of Versailles left it; but it is more than that—it is a compact little philosophy of contemporary history, not too long to be read at a single sitting. A more profitable book for any modern reader is scarcely to be imagined. Mr. Toynbee moves among affairs of the day with the familiarity of any journalist; but he moves with the firm and certain tread of the journalist who is also a skilled historian, quite familiar with all that lies beneath the surface of events, no matter how deep or how distant in time. That familiarity, by the end of the volume, his reader has come to share—with none of the toil that went to make this amazingly easy reading which must have been "cust hard writing."

There is an illuminating contrast between the political map of 1914 and the political map of 1920-1923; and the whole book concludes with a stimulating section on The Horizon, which contrives to summarize the main current of contemporary tendencies intelligently within forty-eight pages. No one, having read it, will fail to turn to the affairs of the hour with a new comprehension.

One of the most interesting things in this meaty little essay is the comparison of pre-war and post-war states. The share of the Great Powers in world affairs has been much reduced since the war because the decrease in their number has naturally led to an increase in the number of lesser states which are neither Great Powers nor yet negligible on the international chess-board. Before the War only two states below the rank of Great Powers had populations of more than ten million, and were taking an active part in international affairs. Today there are ten such states. Five states with populations between five and ten millions were active internationally before 1914, as contrasted with no less than eighteen today. In all, forty-seven lesser states are playing a part in the life of the world where there were but sixteen before the War. Mr. Toynbee surmises that there may be additions to their numbers, if Italy, France, or Japan should prove unable to sustain indefinitely the arduous tasks of a Great Power.

If the first book is an essay for swift and easy reading, the Survey that it introduces is an admirable handbook for prolonged reading, which aims to include all the necessary facts; and as a good deal happened between the beginning of 1920 and the end of 1923, the number of those facts is fairly large. Consequently this is not a book to be read in one sitting or in a few sittings. The reader speedily discovers that he has left behind the lightness and ease that tucked the world into ninety-one pages; and that he is dealing now with a grim honesty intent on including all the essential facts on both sides of every question and on pointing out the best places to find further information.

It is, moreover, possible for the reader to strike straight to the heart of any particular subject that especially concerns him, for there is an analytical table of contents, which is practically a guide to the book as a whole; and as the index misses nothing of importance, the seeker after information can turn at once to whatever he requires. There is an exceedingly useful table of the confusing series of post-treaty conferences, with a digest of the subjects considered at each. This is followed by an adequate but not unduly elaborate digest of four years' history in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, The Islamic World, Tropical Africa, and the Far East. Each subject has a bibliography of the most important books and official documents bearing on it.

Skeleton maps in the text would somewhat have enhanced the value of the Survey, since no one can hope to carry all the complexities of the geographic kaleidoscope in his head; but a series of excellent maps in the back of the book has been adroitly reduced to bare essentials, so that one loses no time in consulting them. The maps unfold so as to lie clear of the pages—a minor convenience, but a great saving of time and temper.

It is hard to think of anyone who has done more to clarify the muddy stream of contemporary affairs than the author of these excellent volumes.

JOHN BAKELESS.

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Lights and Shadows from the Yorkshire Pits

From a Pitman's Notebook, by Roger Dataller. New York: The Dial Press. 271 pages. $2.50.

I HAVE come across only three novels with a coal mining setting, Zola's Germinal, depicting the hard life of the miners of northern France; Welsh's The Underworld, with the scenes laid in Scotland; and Upton Sinclair's King Coal, a story of the Colorado strike. Now comes Roger Dataller's From a Pitman's Notebook, a diary of Yorkshire mining life. Of these four books Germinal is immeasurably the superior; although writing of the French coal miners of sixty years ago, Zola has caught the psychology of the universal coal miner, a behavior that knows no race, time or clime, and has produced a great story. This Yorkshireman reveals his understanding of the coal miner only in glimpses of his work and life.

The early portions of the book are the best. Here we see the author as one of the pitmen and the pictures he presents are like a collection of fascinating snapshots beautifully touched up by his charm of expression. His own reactions to the underground battle for existence are vividly described. At first there is the wonder of discovery, an intense interest in the men and boys about him, then a trace of bitterness appears in his notes and reflections. He has been a miner only two months when he writes a gripping account of his own spiritual revolt, but at no time is he seen in actual protest against conditions. The latter half of the book reveals a detachment from the life observed, for his mining experience is cut short by a fall of rock and after his recovery we see him working as a timekeeper where he no longer has the advantage of intimate contact with the miners. On an annual outing he rides with the mine officials and dines at their table. He loses none of his zeal for his fellowmen, however, but the removal from the physical miseries of the grievous toil and sweat in the hot inner reaches of the mine brings perplexity into his notes, along with clover blossoms and Bible texts. On occasion we see him as lecturer and preacher of "the word," though a very unusual preacher this poet-pitman is. Always does his soul seem burdened with the "really awful immensity of the unrecorded annals" of these men who produce a nation's coal. Therefore, this diary.

By a curious coincidence—for the author confesses that he knows of only two mining novels, The Underworld and King Coal—his opening pages are strikingly reminiscent of the early chapters of Germinal. In both books is found a description of the miners' approach to the mine in the early morning hours and both authors tell of a dousing by a spray of water while being lowered into the mine. These diary pictures are well drawn, but the experienced coal miner must question one's ability to gauge by mere judgment the landmarks overground, especially in the deep pits of Yorkshire.

The author's sketches of the men are faithful portrayals of the characters found in and around all coal mines. There is the banksman, or top cager, as we call him here, whose duty is to see that only the proper number of men occupy each cage and to record the number and bell the engineer when all are safely on. Envious of the miners who are his superiors in matters of experience and wages, he seeks to impress them with his own importance. The Yorkshire scene: "'Fifteen—sixteen,' the banksman counts stentoriously and thrusts his arm across my chest. 'Wait a minute, mate—wait a bit, plenty o' room next time.'" This banksman lives not only in Yorkshire, he lives in Dortmund, in Lens, in Herrin, in Rock Springs, in Scranton—yes, there is a big husky farmer lad who on occasion orders me back from the cage of mornings. He wears a cast-off baseball cap. I wonder if the Yorkshire banksman doesn't wear a cricket cap.

The Deputy, a petty boss, is a universal figure whose duty is to report conditions safe, whether or no, as ordered by the manager, jolly the miners along when timbers and other supplies are held up by a policy of niggardly economy, occasionally defend his person against assault by an outraged miner who feels himself cheated of rightly-earned money, and to become the "goat" to save the management in time of disaster. Roger Dataller observed these things in Yorkshire. I have seen them in many places. They are as universal as the banksman.

Again the typical coal digger when a lecturer has been among them. "'It's all book knowledge,' said one chap the other night. 'I'll bet yon bloke can't make a rabbit hutch.' 'E's none so daft,' returned another; 'e gets 'is livin' wi'out workin' an' that's more'n you or me can do!'" In the language of our American coal digger: "You gotta hand it to that bird—he's no fool. He gits his without workin' an' that's more'n you or me can do!"

For the period that this Yorkshireman is actually "at the picks," he succeeds in making his experiences extremely real—his sketch One Sunday Night is a remarkably graphic account of what it is like to be caught without a light in the impenetrable darkness of the mine. But his brief mining experience makes these sketches all too few. In turning to Disaster and Eviction, for example, the reader is disappointed. The disaster is far away from Tollgate and the comments, though in themselves interesting, leave the tragedy far off. In Eviction we observe with him and his friend Marion a most distressing scene, painted with admirable skill, but we feel their detachment from the suffering before them. Marion remarks: "We can't do very much to help, can we, standing around like this?" They creep away. But the author must not be accused of slumming—his chief interest, as far as the book reveals it, is to give the outside world glimpes of this life so remote and so little understood. This job he does extraordinarily well.

The economic conflict that manifests itself in the business of producing coal is rarely reflected in this diary, nor will the student of industrial conditions find here any arguments or statistics to bolster up his favorite theories. The author has no claims to prove.

Though we are told that the author is the son of generations of miners, and we do see him actually digging coal for a few months, we cannot escape the feeling that after all this pitman is merely a sojourner among these men of whom he writes, an explorer of their souls. He tells us that he has had a lifelong acquaintance with these Yorkshire miners; but though we see him with them, we feel that he is not of them. His sympathies are intense, his perceptions keen, and he writes with the genius of an artist—we regret that he could not have written out of a lifetime experience in the pits. His diary is, however, a fine human plea, well deserving of a high place in coal mining literature.

EDWARD A. WIECK.

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A No-World of All-Colored Light

What's O'Clock?, by Amy Lowell. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 240 pages. $2.25.

THE ultimate inevitable cliché, "obiit," is stamped like a shadowy water-mark on the pages of Amy Lowell's latest book of poems. Turning the leaves of this posthumous volume—written during the last four years of her life—one is constrained to hear "The whisper of Death . . . without a word," under all "the sounds of gold, and brass, and heavily clashed silver" to which she so bravely moved. One sees her, behind the

> Tall magenta flags
> Stinging against a pattern of light blue,

not the alert, matured artist, but the ageing, agonizing woman. No previous book of hers seems to bear so insistently the odor of mortality. One catches it whenever the poet celebrates the wistful fragrance of "dear, dead elegancies." One breathes it with her in the cold gust she faces, standing before the dawn which belongs to her younger rivals, to unborn generations, but not to her. There is an unwonted bitterness in such a poem as The Watershed, wherein she twits her friendly public—whose "waning praise will mark a time of day"—with being "an episode," no longer-lived than herself. There is a cry of self-knowledge and self-disdain and self-pity in Footing Up A Total, in which she measures her glare and noise against the blent colors and whispering bells of a "highly unsuccessful confrère," who will be noticed and cherished when she has been "clanged" to her grave. There is a recurrent autumnal mood, a grievous dwelling upon "the loveliness of old, decaying, haunted things."

But if there is an unaccustomed pathos in several of these poems, there are many more which have the bright hues and the thumping pulse, the "Trumpets and tubas" that Miss Lowell taught us to associate with her work. The book is alive with garden presences, glowing with sunlight on a ply of petals, tremulous with arriving wings: orioles and peacocks, grackles and parrakeets. And ever and again there is the wonder of the moon's "emerald fire" and "wheat-white thighs." Romance in armor, romance in powder and patches, clinks and rustles through her pages as of old. And melodrama, on rather stiff and clumsy legs, stalks through New England fields and cathedral lofts as she liked to hear it do. There are no vast canvases here, but the sweeping brush-stroke learned long ago in Can Grande's Castle is apparent in such pieces as Lilacs and The Congressional Library.

This last poem, which is her apotheosis of America, as Lilacs is that of her New England, is typical of her work in its dynamic richness of color, in its ardent salute to vitality, in an audacity a little blind with its own dazzle. The Congressional Library, at any rate, gives evidence that though her heart strained backward toward the desirable past, Miss Lowell's mind, agile to the end, went on spinning its lassoes for the stiff-necked future. And yet this vigorous piece has less to do with life than with literature. The America that she envisions has its being in "the voices of the furious dead who never die. . . . Dictating their creeds across the vapours of time." It is as though Miss Lowell, unable to establish a relation with the grim machinery of our modern world, took refuge from its harsh incomprehensibilities in the warm security of a library. The danger here was that her fortress might become her prison.

In this, as in earlier volumes, one finds the poet nourishing her genius upon books and landscape—things essentially a part of her. Above the distraction of the modern city, the tragic complexities of contemporary life, she preferred her garden, the top of a post-chaise, a Japanese cherry-orchard, Malmaison, a Cathedral close. She remained a maker of images, rather than a psychologist or a lyricist. Her poetry tended toward the spatial art of painting, not the temporal art of music. The best work in What's O'Clock? is not in the conveying of a mood, the evocation of a character, the presentment of human relations. It is in the deft, precise and vivid pictures with which the longer poems are studded and of which the short ones entirely consist. And yet, in this book she allowed herself to lay aside brush and palette, to sound the personal, the lyric note. Poems like Footing Up A Total, like The Watershed, like The Sisters (Sappho, Mrs. Browning, Emily Dickinson and the poet's own eager self), like the fine sonnets to Duse with which the volume concludes, show an intention and an intensity both new to Miss Lowell's work. One welcomes them as one does a human voice in a world of mirrors and windows, in "a no-world of all-colored light." Not the least regret with which this book leaves the reader is that the poet was not permitted to pursue the untraveled road toward which such pieces point like finger-posts.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

From Ten Literatures

Studies from Ten Literatures, by Ernest Boyd. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.00.

TODAY Mr. Boyd is conspicuously in full flight, ever soaring higher and higher among literary phenomena and portents. In his present book we find him to have switched suddenly from a conspectus of America to a still more comprehensive survey of Europe. All tongues are at his pen's end, including not only "the Scandinavian"—as the copyright notices sometime say—but also the Portuguese and the Polish. If, as an interpreter and an intermediary between the New World and the Old, he is less all-embracing than a Huneker, he is, within his chosen field, even more intensive. For the placing and summarizing of certain Continental authors who appear to be less known among us than they deserve, he becomes a convenient and serviceable authority.

Perhaps his best services are performed for the Spaniards. He reaches them after the obligatory opening among the French, where he apportions the credit for early realism between Zola and the Goncourts, pays timely attention to Anatole France, illumines the protestant Gide, and punctures the vogue of Proust. However, many of us who took hold of Spanish fiction in the days of Valdés, Valera, Galdós and Pardo Bazán, but have since let go, may prefer to move along for the sake of a new grip on later doings in the Peninsula by reading the pages on Unamuno, Baroja, and some five or six others, large and small, important or merely curious. We may learn that Emilia Pardo Bazán has a worthy successor in Concha Espina, and that Madrid, no less than Paris, produces its queer ones to provide gossip and copy for the none too well oriented visitor and student.

Mr. Boyd is also highly serviceable among the winners of Nobel Prizes, whose names so often strike blankly upon

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unprepared ears. Truly, by means of the Stockholm awards, we live and learn. These recent victors, whether Spanish, Scandinavian, Polish or Swiss, are brought forth by our guide from their dusk into the temporary brightness of our easily appeased curiosity. "Their name, their years," spelt by a highly lettered Muse, their titles and plots, their places and relations—all these are given us. We feel "posted"; we check them off; and within a year or two we shall be receptive to names still newer. Meanwhile, greater names await; and one feels that full "fame" may be slower in overtaking these than "elegy" will be.

Our author also devotes a much needed chapter to the German Expressionists—"Expressionism without Tears," be encouragingly calls it. No tears, perhaps, yet certain twistings and writhings; but such experiences are unavoidable for the earnest beginner. The study of Expressionism, like that of the Fourth Dimension, seems to require a long and graduated approach. Just as we begin the one with considerations of the line, the surface and the solid, so we approach the other through the avenues of painting and music before the full rigor of the expressionistic principles come to be applied to the new German fiction, poetry, and drama. Hermann Bahr is the Claude Bragdon who genially essays to expound the mystery, and the average reader will follow the one about as far as he follows the other. At a later stage Otto Flake and Max Freyhan take up the tale; and Mr. Boyd, as a faithful interpreter, pursues them as best he may. The Expressionists culminate in Walter Hasenclever, whose dramas, revolutionary in matter and method, are painstakingly summarized. His Mankind, when it comes, will present the New Thing in its highest potency.

Mr. Boyd reaches out in his various directions with a ready confidence that begets confidence. He shows immense evidences of studiousness; he can be witty at need, and he can offer slight effects of touch-and-go scandal when the indifferent children of the pen lay themselves open. His close-packed volume stocks us up with the necessary data for the next few years.

HENRY B. FULLER.

Out of the North

The Laxdaela Saga. Translated from the Icelandic, and with an introduction by Thorstein Veblen. New York: B. W. Huebsch. 302 pages. $2.50.

The Tree of the Folkungs, by Verner Von Heidenstam. Translated from the Swedish by Arthur G. Chater. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

IT is to be hoped that few will choose this enticingly gotten-up translation of the Laxdæla as their introduction to early Scandinavian literature. The objection is not to Mr. Veblen's work, which furnishes students a valuable record of social and political conditions when Iceland was in transition from paganism to Christianity and from the Viking régime toward centralization of authority. But as literature not only does this exhibit the normal difficulty of the sagas—the profusion of names and genealogical passages to impede tracing relationships (all-important where the blood-feud and not, say, love, is typically the subject); not only, as the translator remarks, has it been smoothed off and touched up by some pious thirteenth-century clerk, but whether or not the latter is to blame, an account of deeds which might have stirred the heart with their noble and stoical ferocity seems, rather, generally flat and grey, though bloodstreaked enough. One short song in c. 77 of Dasent's translation of Burnt Njal conveys more of what made Iceland great than all the butcheries in the Laxdæla.

Von Heidenstam's work comprises two novels, each spanned by a lifetime, with 200 years intervening; while one family provides the central figures of both, neither through marked hereditary characteristics, significant repetition of history, nor otherwise, is their consideration as a literary unit justifiably invited. The first shows the foundation by one of the last Vikings of a great Swedish house, while Christianity and central government are raising their stern faces. In the interval both have prevailed, so that the second part presents, with Folkungs in the saddle, an infant feudal system both supporting and strengthened by an established Church (though one characteristically infiltrated with the nominally outlawed paganism), with a new and interesting phenomenon: the importation of the philosophy of chivalry. As historical and social reconstruction the work is notable and (in spite of the gap) unified; and here, by the way, is the best sort of introduction to the classically bare accounts of the sagas. But this is background. Primarily these are novels, the work of a serene and pitiful mind concerned ultimately (though not as a means to explicit moralizing) with individual character and its fruits of individual peace and pain, with the long, obscurely realized rhythms of individual life. Not great romances, loose-jointed, over-full, but both high-minded and moving.

ABBE NILES.

Fiction of the Day

The Penciled Frown, by James Gray. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.

THIS can only be classified as a collapsed soufflé. Formula: the conceited young dramatic critic in a middle western metropolis, hired by luck, reigning briefly over bad shows and ladies' clubs, fired at last by the boss into real life, into police reporting. As the patrol wagon swishes around the corner on the final page, our hero, frantically clinging on behind, is seen, for the first time, minus his penciled frown. All this in an atmosphere of the most genial piffle, like a prolonged dose of hotel porch pleasantry, high school give and take. A concoction of mildly clever chatter, without characters, and all the more annoying because of the scattered evidences of intelligence on the author's part. Bubbles cheerfully in the juice of its own juvenile smartness. One of those little books likely to amuse the author rather more than anybody else.

The Misty Flats, by Helen Woodbury. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.

OUR hats are off to who first said: "We salute an honest effort. It is a useful quotation, and the most commonly applicable of any of the average run of fiction. The Misty Flats is quite unusually honest, and quite unusually full of effort. And that is about all one can say for it. It chronicles, most minutely, the life of a young girl, from almost the very beginning, and, along with a certain amount of good observation, unhappily reminds one, in its flat, affectionate detail, of the remarks of even the most intelligent of mothers about their own children.

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Mr. Petre, by Hilaire Belloc. With 22 Illustrations by G. K. Chesterton. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. $2.50.

FEW people can be as entertaining as Mr. Belloc, and few are more readily forgiven than he for trying to spread the entertainment a little farther than it will naturally go. In Mr. Petre he has hit upon a most amusing idea, which, as should be, he treats with exuberant inconsequence. The formula is aphasia, mistaken identity, an obscure Englishman unwittingly playing the part of an American millionaire. The early stages of Mr. Petre's mystification are thoroughly amusing, and the later stages are quite neat, but in the middle are vast tracts of comparative dullness, of the inexplicable details of business manipulations, for which Mr. Belloc has more appetite than most readers will forgive him for. Mr. Chesterton's illustrations are none the less pleasant for not being always to the point.

Eclipse, by S. P. B. Mais. New York: Brentano's. $2.

THIS novel by an English critic bears more of the marks of the critic than of the novelist. The critic turned novelist is prone to apply his intelligence to the wrong places, and Mr. Mais lavishes on dialogue and comment a sparkle which cannot hide the basic non-existence of the characters. About half the space and most of the emphasis is upon the dishonesty, inequality and blatant meanness of Fleet Street, and the characters embark upon a love story which remains tied to the dock of journalism. A journalism which Mr. Mais despises heartily, so heartily that his burlesque of it is more informed by malice than by wit. He has built a fairly gay, thoroughly trivial house whose every room and stair echoes with words but which, for lack of real people, remains noisily uninhabited.

The Grace of Lambs, by Manuel Komroff. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.

MR. KOMROFF is a fairly skilful craftsman and some of these stories seem first cousin to reality. But since his reality is a Russian reality, since his scenes and people are Russian, a second's mental comparison with Chekhov, Gorky, Bunin, Kuprin makes this cousinship much more remote. Curiously enough, if the scenes and the people were American, one would be tempted to think much better of them. But, being Russian, too many great examples rise to dwarf them beyond recall, and at the end one is no more than moderately glad for introduction to a smallish, neatish talent, prodigal of the gestures of warmth, yet somehow cool, synthetic and commonplace, with the surface plausibility of deft copies of great originals. A talent that one would like to exile to the autobiographical Middle-West, where he would probably be a head taller than the average.

Gambrinus and Other Stories, by Alexandre Kuprin. Translated by Bernard Guilbert Gurney. New York: The Adelphi Company. $2.

ISN'T there in all the United States, in Salem, New York, Tampa, Galveston, San Francisco, a sailor's beer-hall at least a quarter as remarkable as the Gambrinus, rendezvous of the sailors of the world in Odessa? The merit of the story is double: the Gambrinus was an extraordinary den, and Kuprin is an extraordinary writer, but it is impossible to disentangle one merit from the other. To Americans the performance is maddening—do we lack either interesting beer-halls or writers who can describe a good beer-hall memorably, or do we possibly lack both? (We use the beer-hall of course figuratively.) What would a man like Kuprin, whose descriptive powers, while not of the front rank, are decidedly very near it, do if let loose on the American scene? What would some of our own blue-ribbon writers do if given the Gambrinus as a subject? Are there any who could jump into the middle of it so vigorously, push its years and men, a long roll, many nations, a thousand songs, a million glasses, so vividly past our eyes? Few short stories have turned up recently with such a power to live and be worth reading again.

A Virgin Heart, by Remy de Gourmont. Translated by Aldous Huxley. New York: The Adelphi Company. $2.50.

CŒUR VIERGE made a great deal of noise, say we who were not there to remember, when it first came out. And now we wonder why. Apparently it was considered a daring and profound plunge into the depths of the human heart, particularly female, and it was also, in a curious way, "scientific." Which means that it was an attempt to view human loves with as dispassionate a naturalism as Gourmont thought he was viewing the embracing beetles on the first page of this book. But he was mistaken. His view, while partly scientific, was compounded of a dozen other unreasonable and reasonable qualities, human and artistic, and his people suffer from having been created in a vision most chaotically human, artistic and naturalistic at the same time. Result: tiny fragments of real beauty and feeling, like accidentally fine snapshots, inserted in a pattern of the most wooden, lifeless determinism. To the whole a laboratory, ice-water sensuality lends a pinkish glare, but no warmth. An admirable example of an intelligent artist astride a new method, a fiery steed which turns out to be a rocking horse.

MOSES HARPER.

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BABETTE DEUTSCH has just published her latest book of poems, Honey Out of the Rock, brought out by Appleton.

HENRY B. FULLER, novelist, contributes frequent reviews to the New Republic.

MOSES HARPER is a frequent contributor to current periodicals.

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